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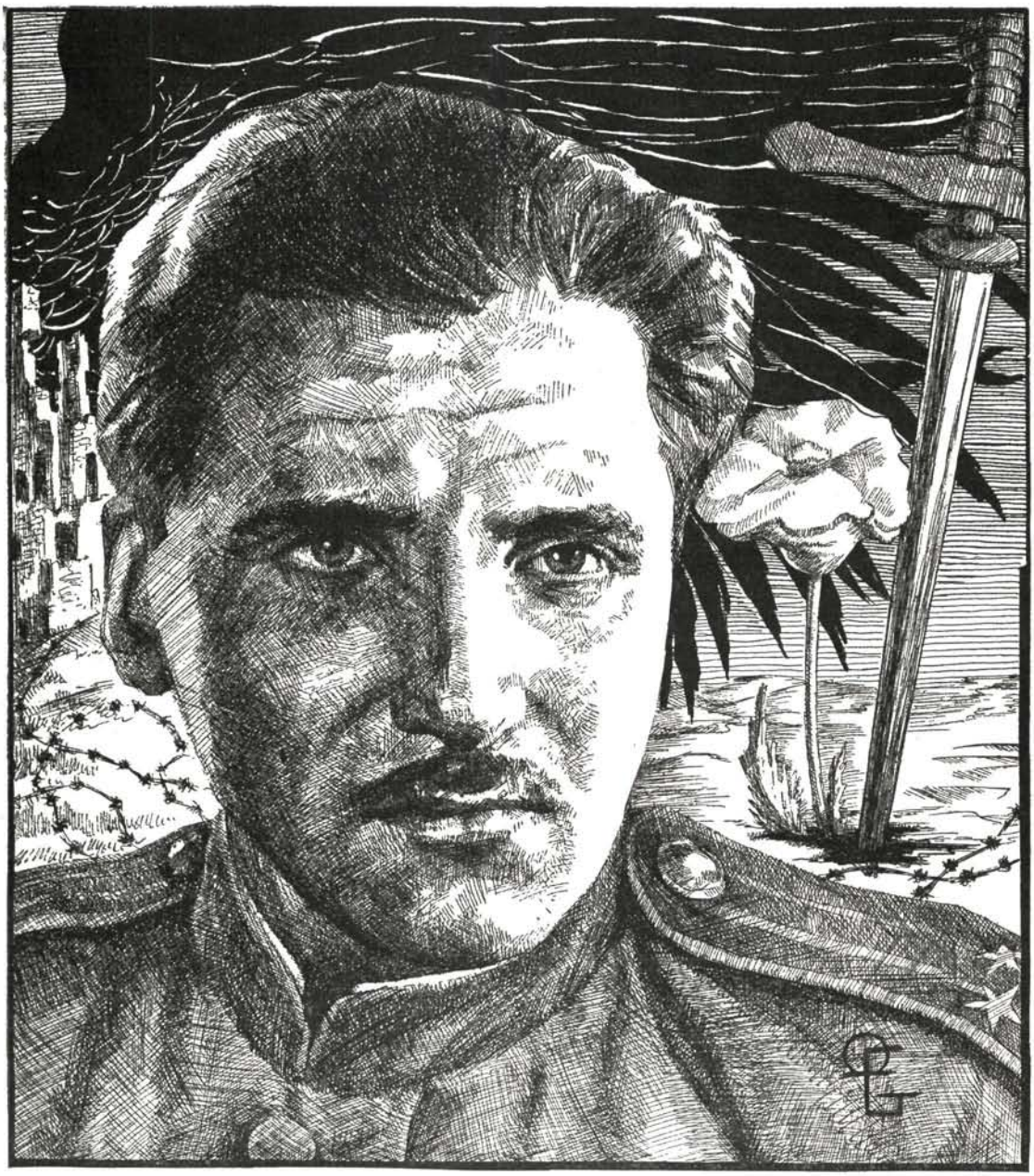

Konstantine Simonov, author of "Days and Nights." *(See page 10)*

The Mad Triumvirate

BY JOHN T. PASCIUTTI

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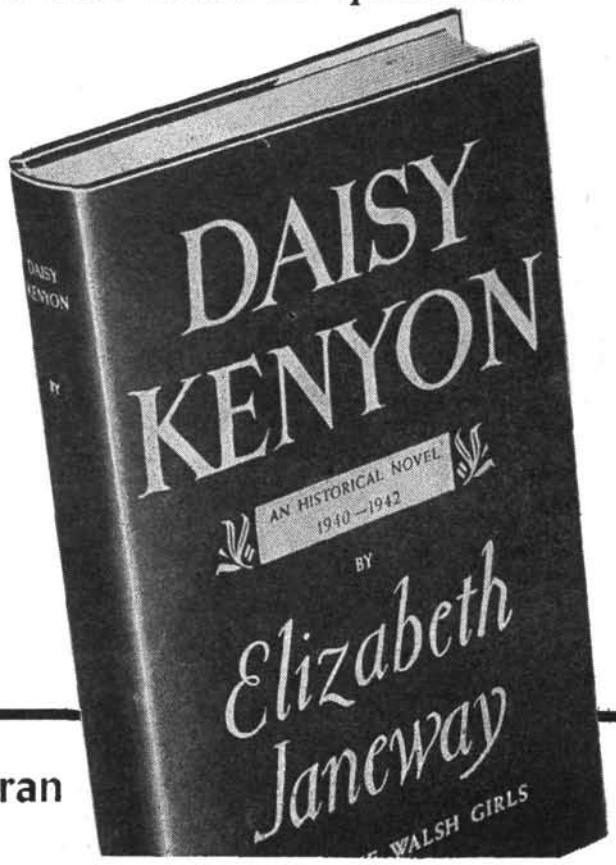

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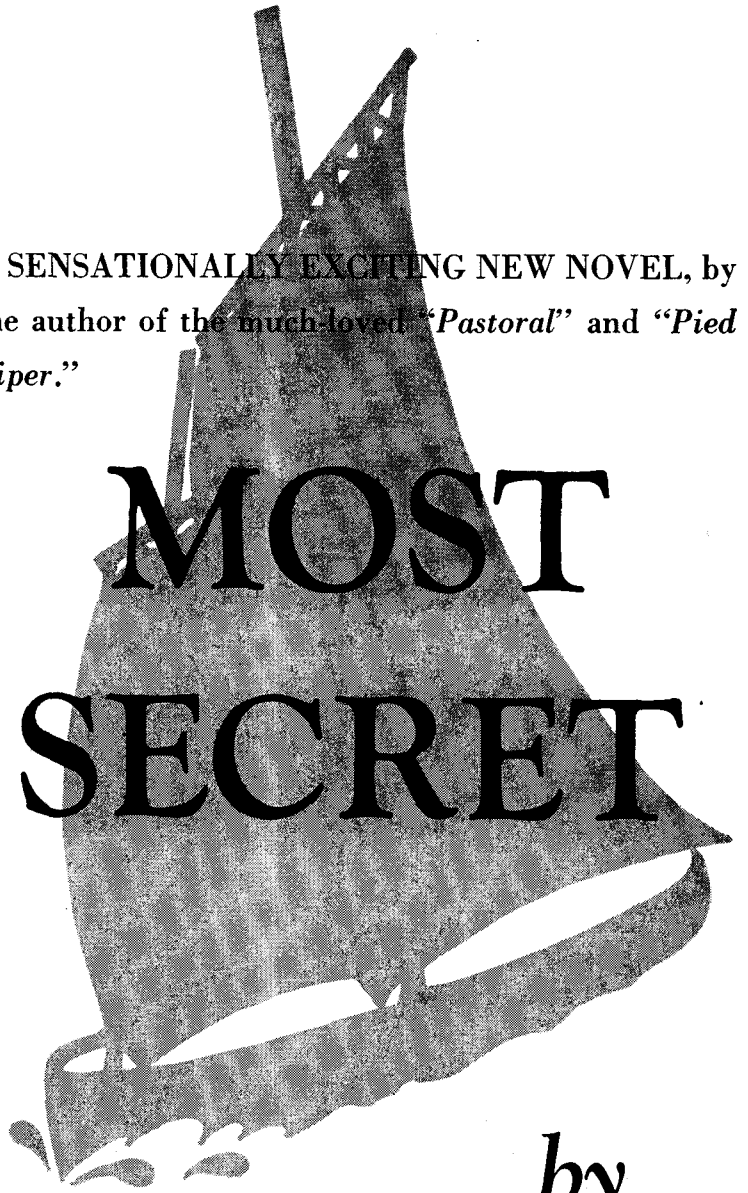

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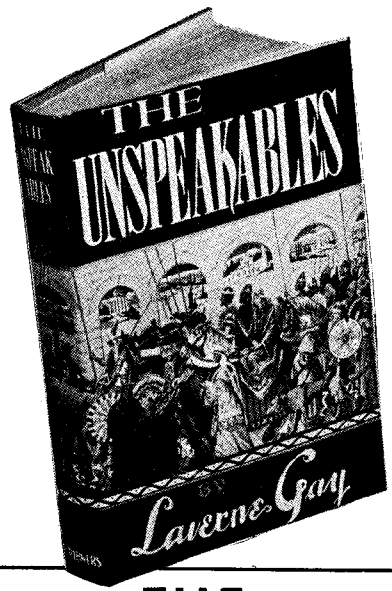

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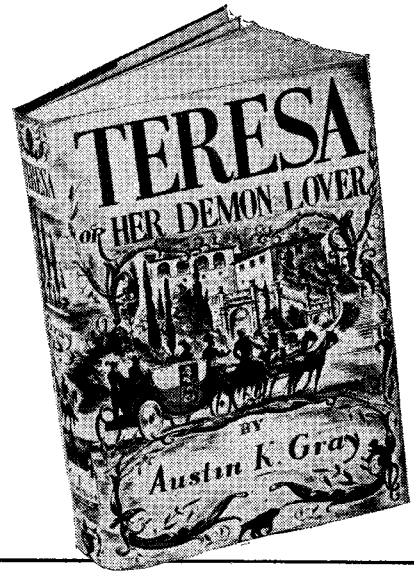

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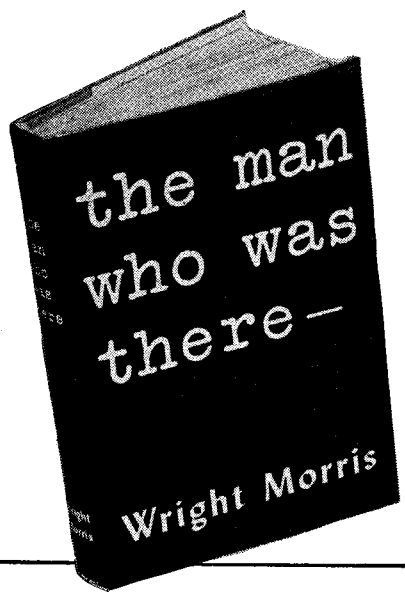

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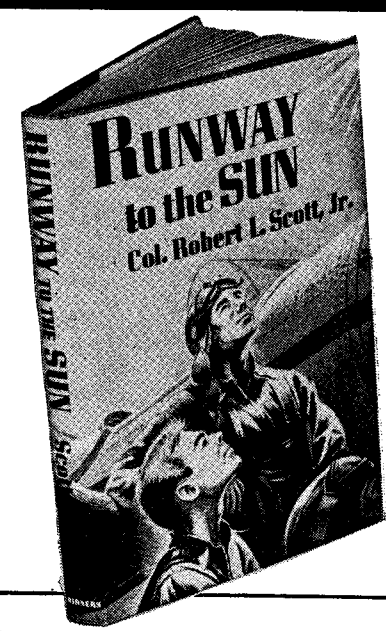

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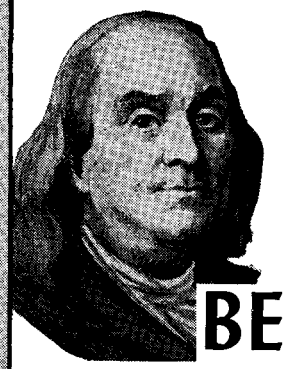

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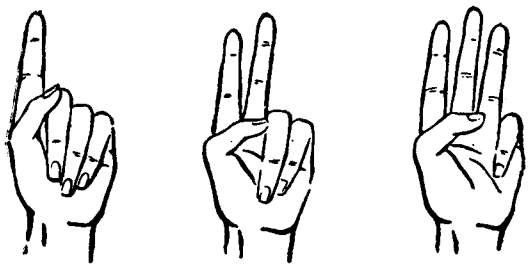

You probably weren't aware of it, but your very life depends on *algorithm*. It's a subject that affects everybody and everything. Whether you're hearing Toscanini conduct a Brahms Piano Concerto or freewheeling downhill on a bicycle, whether you're nervously glancing at an accelerating speedometer or walking slowly across the George Washington Bridge as the sun sets, algorithm, or the art of measure, is intimately involved in whatever you do.

The reason for our telling you all this, as you so shrewdly suspect, is that we've just published another book. It isn't, however, just another book. The title is THE RIVER MATHEMATICS, and the author, *Alfred Hooper*, is already known to you as the author of the bestseller A MATHEMATICS REFRESHER. His new book will not only appeal to those who love the strange and curious, but will delight everyone who still treasures a sense of wonder about the world around him.

Did you know, for example, that our entire system of numbers is based on the simple fact that we have *ten* fingers? Such numbers as thirteen, fourteen, fifteen and sixteen represent the ideas "three-ten", "four-ten", "five-ten" and "six-ten". Had men been given twelve fingers instead of ten, we should now be thinking of seventeen as "five-twelve" instead of "seven-ten". As a matter of fact, a duodecimal system—one based on the number twelve—holds many advantages, since twelve can be evenly divided by two, three, four, and six . . . while ten can be divided by only two and five.

Most of us think of zero as nothing at all—but without it the science of mathematics might still be back in the clumsy days of the abacus. The zero keeps the other digits in their proper columnar places, eliminating the need of checkerboards and ruled columns. Otherwise, we should not be able to write a number like 4402.

Here are some other interesting facts, selected at random, from among thousands that stud this fascinating book: An acre is the amount of land a man can plow in a morning; the pound (from the Latin word *libra*, abbreviated lb.) originally contained 12 ounces but was increased to 16 ounces to make up for spoilage; a million is the same the world over, but you may get shortchanged by 900,000,000,000 if you ask for a billion, depending on whether you're in the United States or England; a fathom is the length across a man's outstretched arms (from the Anglo-Saxon word *faethm*, meaning embrace); there were two great Ptolemys in mathematical history, one came 450 years after the other; and for those of us who always have trouble finding our way, it may be some comfort to know that there are, believe it or not, *three* norths (true, magnetic, and compass) . . . which probably explains everything.

Nine numbers and a zero—and it seems incredible that so much could have been done with them. Just to list the *kinds* of numbers that mathematicians have devised will give you some idea of how ingenious man can be. Here are the various kinds of numbers now in use: Negative, positive, rational, irrational, proper, improper, real, imaginary, pure, and complex. Have you met them all?

But THE RIVER MATHEMATICS is, of course, much more than a treasury of startling or amusing facts about the science of numbers. It is primarily an outline of the history and the techniques of mathematics for the general reader, from the finger-counting of primitive man to the calculus of Newton. As someone pointed out more than a hundred years ago, "The study of mathematics, like the Nile, begins in minuteness, but ends in magnificence." So, THE RIVER MATHEMATICS. It offers a bird's-eye view of the development of mathematical ideas as they parallel the history of the human race during the past six thousand years or more.

There are many ideas and statements in the book which delighted and surprised us, but perhaps what pleased us most was something we found on page 379:

"Mathematics offers mankind a treasure even greater than the material riches and power to which it is the key. It opens even to ordinary men and women a highly developed system of accurate and honest thinking, and with it a stabilizing influence in an age of doubt and perplexity . . . More than any other system of human thought, mathematics offers a key to a better understanding of the laws that govern our mysterious universe."

THE RIVER MATHEMATICS

By ALFRED HOOPER

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The Saturday Review of Literature

The Mad Triumvirate

Oriani, D'Annunzio, and Mussolini Formed the Lunatic Fringe

JOHN J. PASCIUTTI

ON August 18, 1926, Benito Mussolini probably reached the peak of popularity when he stood on the platform before the people of Pesaro. He had just announced to the world that the lira, the symbol of the Italian nation, the measure of the people's wealth, the fruit of their work, their struggles, their sacrifices, their tears, and their blood would be defended by the Fascist regime and its Duce with the last breath, to the last drop of blood. Mussolini's word was law to the mob then. Mussolini and Fascism had done one of the biggest jobs of *selling* known to modern times. The Italian mob followed the spellbinder with enthusiastic shouts. Those who did not run trudged reluctantly along. Those who would have resisted were given castor oil, undiluted and without synthetic flavors. There was another mob that also fell into line. The system was not compulsory for travelers, writers, and diplomats who journeyed annually to Italy in search of culture, sunshine, and *vino* but they swallowed it gleefully. In fact, he inspired these travelers with a profound hope for the future, a profound belief in its glorious destiny.

> Fascism is not merely an effort toward a new political system, but a new way of life. Thus it is the greatest human experiment of our time, perhaps of all time.

Strong doses of propaganda like this were served by our leading periodicals and swallowed without distaste by the public because it was supposedly the objective opinion of trained observers and "experts." Mussolini was bringing order out of chaos. The great powers applauded also. They were themselves in a precarious position, doing a high-flying act on the trapeze of inflation and a stable political "order" was important to them.

But could it last? Both history and tradition gave negative answers. For history this was to be another of those adventures in tyranny made possible by intolerable human misery. It could only end as the leaders of similar revolutions, Catiline, Cola de Rienzi, Savanarola had ended before, in violent death. By tradition the end was lunacy and despair. The tradition in which Mussolini chose to march, that of Oriani and d'Annunzio, the great cultural heroes of Fascist Italy, pointed straight to frustration and madness. In fact Oriani, d'Annunzio, the forgotten poet of Fascism, and Mussolini compose a triumvirate which might be called the lunatic fringe of modern Italy.

D'Annunzio—poet, novelist, dramatist, lover, eccentric, viveur, and superman—was intimately identified with the advent of Fascism.

> . . . d'Annunzio . . . . alone can explain the birth of Fascism, since he was its inventor, Mussolini being no more than a skillful plagiarist.

To it he contributed much of its nomenclature, his own brand of headstrong nationalism, and the heroic pose of the cultural hero. The poet was in the thick of Italy's war on the Central Powers in World War I and received five gold medals and numerous inter-Allied citations. After his seizure of Fiume, it has been said, he might have marched straight to Rome and become the head of the Italy of that day. But the "Poet of Italy" once so exuberant, tireless, and daring was played out. He had set an example to the Italians of the virtue of living dangerously. "To die is to be happy! To be happy is to die!" He restored a spirit of self-confidence in the Italians which Mussolini perpetuated in the euphemism: "Better to live one day like a lion than one hundred years like a sheep."

THIS idea, to live heroically, was for d'Annunzio a commandment and for Mussolini a symbol, the symbol of Fascism. But instead of marching on Rome d'Annunzio retired to his *Vittoriale*, the villa on Lake Garda which, till his death, was kept up for him by a grateful Duce. There, in his own words, "that vague region of the soul where his bestiality and his divinity joined hands" became even more vague. The *Vittoriale* was in essence a private lunatic asylum in which he spent endless days meditating in his "chamber of pure dreams," the luxuriously draped funeral chapel where his coffin, prepared by his own order, lay waiting. D'Annunzio was seeking to end sensationally a personal drama that was both exciting and successful but was tending to an unsatisfactory conclusion. It was lunacy but not of the violent sort. A nebulous fog that made life glisten with irreality had settled down on the poet's mind.

Mussolini owes much to d'Annunzio but the man to whom he is most indebted is Alfredo Oriani. Oriani is the acknowledged official "father" of Fascism. And to think that Fascism—the rebirth of the glory that was Rome in a new and youthful Italy—should have been nurtured spiritually by a colossal inferiority complex!

Oriani was neglected and ignored in his lifetime. Unable to win a public as a novelist he resorted successively to history, playwriting, journalism, and politics. In the face of total public indifference he doggedly piled up one volume on another to the number of twenty-eight and never doubted the value of his work. It was not until after Oriani's death that one reader, Benito, pored over his pages and confessed his admiration, and forced his appreciation of Oriani's works on a whole people. In 1924 Mussolini led a ritualistic march to the *Cardello*, the villa where Oriani lived and died, to

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consecrate it as a national shrine. Oriani's books, which no publisher would touch, were collected and printed in a deluxe edition at government expense.

Nothing gives a better insight into the phenomenon of modern Italy and the story of its Duce than a glimpse of Oriani's life.

Oriani's troubles began on August 22, 1852 and ended on October 18, 1909. The youngest of three children, he was dubbed the "blockhead" by his own mother. The father, Luigi Oriani, belonged to the lower landed gentry, a man cursed by a marriage with a woman whose social position and financial needs were over his head. Both father and son were outcasts from their own family.

Alfredo's mother, brother, and sister were united by a close bond of sympathy and affection. The docile, precocious brother, Hercules, impressed everyone favorably because of his intelligence, his manner, and his ability to hold his own in talking with his elders. On the other hand the "blockhead," when he was not trapping mice, toads, and insects, of which he had a large collection, could be seen aimlessly tumbling the bucket in the well, gazing spellbound at the glistening surface ripples. The comparison with his brother was so damaging that Alfredo was made to take his meals in the kitchen with the servants. From the thread of this lack of understanding and sullen loneliness was woven the pattern of Oriani's youth.

AFTER the death of his wife, Alfredo's father gave up his home in the city and moved to one of his country houses, the now famous *Cardello* (Goldfinch). The son, Alfredo, was placed in a religious school. Once again he displayed his inability to work for the recognition he claimed by right. Haughty and sullen, he could not break the line of organized hostility which always greets the newcomer in a boarding school. This lack of social tact left him solitary and bitter. At the age of fourteen he left the school without regret. After tutoring privately for a time he entered the university in Rome where he took a degree as Doctor of Law at the early age of twenty.

Alfredo, at twenty, had no thought of practising law. If his father retained any hopes of retrieving his fortunes through his son, his doom was sealed when Alfredo decided to settle down on the family estate and devote his time to literature. The family succeeded in annoying but not in dislodging him. In this niggardly refuge the years came and went without seeming to leave any trace on the life of Alfredo. Only one interest, bicycling, varied the pangs of authorship. The peasants, accustomed to the sight of this huge man with a long beard and eyes that nearly popped out of his head racing over the roads or pacing the fields in violent meditation, looked upon him as a harmless madman and referred to him as "the lunatic from the *Cardello*."

There is no hint here of the high tension at which Oriani's life was lived. The momentous, the breathtaking events in his life were circumscribed in the closed circle of his mind, the page, and the inkwell. He contended that a drama, to be written, had to be lived. The twenty-eight volumes of his collected works contain thousands of dramas, big and small but lived through the imagination. They are concerned not merely with the problem of human conduct but with the vast field of national honor. A strange combination of Quixotic enthusiasm and Socratic detachment, all the fuel of his body and mind went to stoke the furnace of his literary efforts.

The irony of Oriani's life is equalled only by its paradoxes. His early volumes, admittedly amateurish and objectionable, found a publisher and some readers. The morbidity of his youth had found its way into his first two books. He had intended to be realistic. He succeeded in being lascivious and decadent.

This beginning made a marked man of Oriani. As the years passed the public seemed not to notice the fact that the fog of youthful hysteria was being dispersed by the intense rays of mature idealism for the reason that no one bought his books. In a work entitled "Matrimony" he penned a strong answer to the book of the younger Dumas in favor of divorce. In "Up to Dogali" he dragged the depths of history for an explanation of the crisis which followed the unification of Italy. In the final inspired and brilliant chapters, provoked by the news of the Slaughter of Dogali, where an Italian regiment was wiped out to the last man in Ethiopia, he strongly attacked the government's weak colonial policy, and called on the Italians to "break the spell which the eternal beauty of the land casts upon the people and makes them forgetful of the soldiers who are giving up their lives in line of duty in the bosom of the African desert." He railed against an "Italy grown dull enjoying cowardly privileges under bourgeois constitutionality." Both of these works were ignored by critics and public alike.

FAILURE only spurred him to greater effort. In order to instil a consciousness of past deeds and faith in a more glorious future he wrote a "History of Political Strife in Italy" for the thousand years preceding 1887. As no publisher would take it he decided to print it privately. His financial situation had been precarious for years. This expensive venture eliminated the element of suspense. Henceforth, he was definitely ruined and bankrupt. The only way he could dispose of any copies of the book was to give them away.

This neglect, amounting to ostracism, is not hard to explain. The efficacy of courtesy in dominating others

—From "Mussolini in the Making."
Mussolini is arrested as a revolutionist by the Italian Police. But that was in 1915.

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was entirely lost on him. He opposed almost everything that was considered progressive in the post-Risorgimento period in which he lived. He criticized not only the manner of Italian unification but the result. He disliked the manner of unification because it had been attained through the victories of others; the result, because he was convinced that the patriots who had bled and hanged and faced the firing squads had been short-changed in a casual bourgeois manner. He said:

> . . . it was an Italy which had been stooping before the other powers for sixteen years as if ashamed to have attained its unity. . . . It was an Italy which was dragged to Vienna like a damsel by Imperial Austria, which Berlin looked upon as a preserve of the Germanic empire, which was derided by the papacy, which was badly represented in Parliament, and which was governed even worse by the ministers.

In order to be great, Oriani contended (here is the basic tenet of Mussolini's thinking), a country must be strong. It has a moral obligation to be powerful, to expand, and to conquer not only in the realm of ideals but with emigration, commerce, industry, science, art, religion, and war.

Unbridled liberty, he felt, must give way to the principle of a higher authority, self-interest to the interest of the nation as a whole. The state, matrimony, the family, and religion must be respected. Selfishness and the pursuit of pleasure must make way for the return of the sway of Christ. While ignoring the sway of Christ, Mussolini accepted all these ideas literally.

The idea of force, curiously, gained an ever increasing hold on Oriani as his personal misery and helplessness increased. Force, and a modern leader who would fight the idea of a weak, petty Italy to a standstill. A leader with a sense of the historic traditions of his country in his subconscious and the blood of the hero in his veins. "The ruler of tomorrow will be the man who best expresses this haughty ideal."

The answer to Oriani's prayer in the opinion of Mussolini, was Mussolini!

How deeply the ideology of the Blackshirts had its roots in these ideas must be obvious to all. Mussolini took Oriani over bag and baggage and formulated a program with what he found that was not without its moment of seeming success. He strove to make Italy powerful, and respected. He eliminated parliamentarianism. He instituted an authoritarian rule. Even an empire, and a semblance of internal prosperity and eternal growth in trade, were realized.

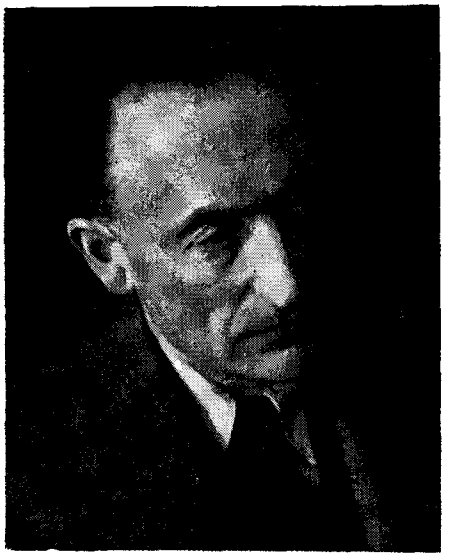
"The hail of misfortune is falling on everything; on my fields and in my heart," wailed Oriani in the last days of his life. An acquaintance who stopped at the *Cardello* during this time found him "hunched up like a beggar against the side of the house. He was grim, silent, and beaten. Tears were flowing from his eyes." This was the pass to which the spiritual father of Fascism had been brought by his heroic visions *in camera*. The spiritual son, Benito Mussolini, did not sink down into oblivion so unmolested and ignored. After many attempts on his life, after years of rumors of failing health and wavering mind, his mangled body, crowded into a pine box, lies in a nameless grave.

Hydr to Jere

THE WIND IS RISING. By Jules Romains. Translated by Gerard Hopkins. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1945. 559 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by THEODORE M. PURDY

THE English version of M. Romains's endurance-record novel has now reached its twelfth volume. Although its characters have gone through one war and are well on their way to another, the end is not in sight. "The Wind Is Rising" covers the years 1927-28, when the franc had been momentarily stabilized, the world depression was yet to come, and comparative peace reigned over pre-Hitler Europe. However, as M. Romains is at pains to demonstrate, the seeds of political, economic, and moral disintegration were already germinating in France.



Jules Romains "can go on like this as long as his health and the paper supply hold out."

The first part of the new volume is called "The Gathering of the Gangs." It is devoted primarily to the activities of one Gilbert Nodiard, a cold-blooded schemer who has organized a small Fascist group known as "Action First." The members are all young, all personal friends of Gilbert. Imitating German models, he seeks to bind them to him by mystic carnal ties, but his friends and their wives merely take advantage of his promptings to indulge in a promiscuous sex orgy—without Gilbert. It is significant that the group has as yet no program. Gilbert merely wishes to create a tool capable of winning power and opposing democratic elements. His attempt to buy aid from a more active gang of Paris toughs meets with no success, but he does enlist a distinguished reactionary general.

"Offered in Evidence," the second part of the book, is more diffuse. Jerphanion and his political friends reappear and talk a great deal. His friend the writer Jallez returns from America, talks, begins one love affair, and continues another. The financier Haverkamp pyramids his paper wealth, with retribution obviously not far off. Quinette, the bookseller-murderer, who will be remembered from the first volume of the series, makes an enigmatic deathbed confession to Jallez. Other familiar characters reappear briefly, but there are no very startling or new developments.

The book is a good example of the author's methods and will no doubt be received with satisfaction by the faithful who have read their way through the 8,000-odd pages of the whole novel. But one cannot help wondering where all this vast machinery of words is tending. Are we never to see "Men of Good Will" emerging clearly from its tortuous plot?

Since the first volumes were published in the early thirties, critical and popular opinion about the work has gone almost full circle, from neglect to high praise and back again. (In England and here, that is: in France it has never been too well received.) The climax of appreciation came with "Verdun" in 1940. Now even Mr. Fadiman, who once proclaimed that our proudest boast to our grandchildren might be that we had been contemporaries of Jules Romains, finds the later volumes "uninspired."

"The Wind Is Rising" will do nothing to reverse this trend. Gilbert's schemes have a certain evil fascination, but they remain unreal. There are arid deserts of talk, with little action or character development, and never a ray of humor or earthly reality. It is increasingly evident that M. Romains can go on like this as long as his health and the paper supply hold out. He is a competent craftsman and his books are always readable. Often they reflect admirably the treacherous currents of European life—but so do the files of any major newspaper.

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Every Man a Hero

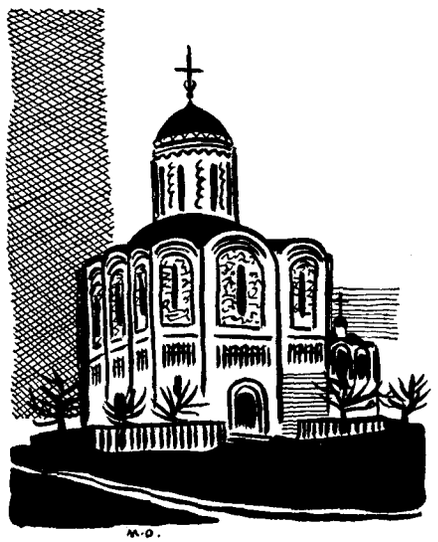
DAYS AND NIGHTS. By Konstantine Simonov. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1945. 421 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by HARRISON SMITH

CONSTANTINE SIMONOV has accomplished two remarkable feats in his novel of the siege of Leningrad. First, that a war novel of such stature should have appeared so soon after the end of hostilities, and second, that a modern Russian novel should speak the universal human language of suffering and heroism without a single trace of the usual Soviet propaganda. It is no wonder that "Days and Nights" has swept over Russia and is regarded there as the best novel of the war.

It is not a reflective novel, for it is straight reporting from beginning to end, and it consequently lacks a quality that might have made it truly great and enduring, less isolated in space and time. During the war, fragments of "Days and Nights" appeared in *Red Star,* the Russian Army newspaper, where they seemed so real and so related to the experiences of thousands of men that they did not read like fiction but like direct reports from the front. It is, therefore, less a novel than superb and imaginative reporting, and though the characters are doubtless invented they are in a sense every heroic Russian who fought for his country. There are only three women in the book, a seventeen-year-old nurse, who furnishes the romantic relief, her mother, and an old woman who lives with three children hidden in the cellar of a half-ruined apartment house. To a Russian soldier they must have seemed like every woman, loving and fiercely protective of her own. There is only one bad man in the book, the son of a priest who becomes a traitor and who plots with the Germans behind the lines. The enemy are not men, bad or good, only creatures to be outwitted and killed.

The novel begins when Captain Suburov crosses the Volga with his command and enters Leningrad, already half-encircled by the Germans. He rescues Anya, the young Army nurse, from drowning, and that evening is plunged into an epic struggle to take three strategically placed apartment houses from the enemy and to hold them safe from ferocious night-and-day attacks. In the end, he is wounded and taken to a hospital where Anya finds him and later has him taken to the hut in which she is living with her mother. By the time he is well enough to return to battle the Germans are losing their last offensive and are finally in full retreat.



The novel is a continual nightmare of fighting, hairbreadth escapes, and violence, like the last act of a melodrama prolonged to book length. Captain Suburov is the perfect soldier who knows how to command his men, understand their personal qualities, and save their lives when it is possible to do so. His commanding officer, an overzealous colonel, is almost as dangerous to his life as the enemy, since he is always urging him to advance immediately, though the captain knows that a strategic retreat or delaying an attack until night would be better tactics. A serious political investigation is another annoyance that he has to endure in the heat of battle. And yet this hero never complains. Indeed, in the entire novel there is little of the complaining and grousing that readers of war books have come to assume as a part of army life, in and out of battle. It may well be that the Russian soldier does not resemble those of other armies. But the reader suspects that, since the novel was written in time of war, Simonov was addressing a public that could not be told what soldiers, even Russians, are really like and what they really talk about even while shells are exploding around them.

But "Days and Nights" is a heroic novel, and it is certainly near enough the truth in its revelation of the heroism of the men who turned back the Nazi tide at Stalingrad to give everyone who reads it a new concept of the true character of the Russian people. And in a sense, the straightforward way in which the story is told adds to its strength and simplicity.

Now that the war is over we may expect from Konstantine Simonov a more complete and more philosophical novel of the war. He is only thirty years old, and yet he has become one of Russia's most important writers. He has published short stories, drama, lyrical poetry, war correspondence, and now this novel. His play, "The Russian People," won the Stalin Prize in 1942, and it is said that he is read in twenty-one languages in the U. S. S. R. and that his books have sold millions of copies. Certainly few young reporters can know warfare as well as he does. In 1939, after graduating from the Literary Institute of the Writer's Union, he was sent to Outer Mongolia to cover the battle of Khalkhin Gol and since 1941 has covered every Russian front from the Berents to the Black Sea and from Stalingrad to Berlin. His accomplishment as a newsman was not only to tell the Russian people and its army about the war but to give them the confidence that was necessary to win it.

Catherine of Aragon

By William H. Matchett

WHERE did Catherine of Aragon go
When Henry dismissed her and called in another?
What were her feelings about the divorce?
About love? About Henry? About Anne Boleyn?
Would she have rather met death at the block,
Than life with its offering of hours alone?
Was she relieved? Was her freedom a joy
Or a sorrow—a boredom—a dimming of light?
Do you know if she missed him (presuming she loved him)?
Did she think of Prince Hal as a tall handsome youth?
Did she sew on fine linen to store in her closet?
Did she heat smooth stones for her cold empty bed?
Where did Catherine of Aragon go?
What did she do? What did she say?
How did she live, when her love was ended?

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Russia and the Wave of the Future

EUROPE IN REVOLUTION. By John Scott. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1945. 265 pp. $3.

Reviewed by EDGAR ANSEL MOWRER

IN his policy toward the Soviet Union, the late President Roosevelt was guided by a profound conviction that Russia and the Western world were evolving toward each other. If an immediate clash could be avoided by American concessions, serious differences would ultimately disappear.

This is approximately, it seems to me, the thesis of John Scott in his new, outspoken book, "Europe in Revolution." This reviewer accepts that thesis. His interest in the present volume lies, however, in Mr. Scott's very frank discussion of the Soviet Union.

"Europe in Revolution" is devastatingly frank. In one place, Mr. Scott makes an almost startling admission. "Dissenters may say, and *with some reason* . . . that the Soviet Union actually grinds its people down . . . has undergone changes which can only be characterized as the betrayal *of the ideas of socialism.*" (Italics mine.) Personally, Mr. Scott feels that Bolshevism has benefited the Russian masses and its spread all over Europe would be beneficial to the common people. Nevertheless he paints the Soviet Union exactly as its American critics have been saying that it is. Here are some details:

"Soviet society became stratified... The wage differential between the director of a factory and its janitor was twenty to one. Lazy workers went hungry . . . Most Soviet children were brought up in private homes and often cared for by domestic servants. Those who opposed Stalin were dealt with as enemies of the people. The Old Bolsheviks no longer ran the Soviet Union. History was rewritten. The church had come to life again . . ." The Army shared authority with the Party bigwigs. "The Red Army officer was forbidden to carry a burden heavier than a briefcase." (Or ride "hard" in the trains or sit in poor theatre seats. E.A.M.)

Conclusion:

> In every way the Soviet Union had moved toward accepting the way of life prevailing among the western European nations—in every way except that the means of production remained in the hands of the State and were operated not for profit but for maximum production and consumption.

Moreover, this autocratic ultra-powerful State is, Mr. Scott thinks, growing steadily and fast. Its collectivist economic philosophy is spreading. Its population is increasing rapidly. Its industrial output may soon surpass that of powerful capitalist countries.

Mr. Scott views this development with satisfaction. Having established subordinate governments next its frontiers, Russia will "oppose revolutionary tendencies everywhere in Europe." Therefore if we Americans "reconcile ourselves to social change in Europe" and "deal realistically with the Soviet Union," peace will be possible.

What, in Mr. Scott's eyes, does dealing "realistically" mean? To begin with, he is quite cynical in admitting we can have "harmonic relations" only on Russian terms. For by 1970 the Soviet Union will be militarily irresistible. Then, "if history repeats itself, one can expect . . . that the Soviet Union will try to include, or at least control, all or most of Europe. If the small nations . . . resist this process, then force might be employed." Until the time is ripe for that, the Russians will concentrate on reconstruction. This will occur in ten years with American help, or in twenty-five if such help be refused. Anyway, for another decade the Soviet Union will remain cut off from the world behind its "iron curtain" (Churchill).

To some Americans this sort of veiled threat will seem like a hint to destroy the Soviet Union now while it is still vulnerable. Not to Mr. Scott. Either such an American attempt would fail or, if successful, would have accomplished nothing. Where would we find allies? The English, the French, the Germans, the Chinese? All written off by Mr. Scott. "So we are forced to the conclusion that fighting the Soviet Union immediately is impossible; after the defeat of Japan . . . extremely difficult, even in ten years doubtful, dangerous . . ."

Anyway it would do us no good. For even if a coalition conquered the Soviet Union and divided it under a new form of government, within another generation its strength, based on resources and numbers, would be restored.

Now Mr. Scott knows as well as anyone that this is baloney: a divided Soviet Union would not be a Soviet Union and Russia under another sort of government might cease to be imperialist. But this talk enables our author to make his real point: either the United States must fight the Soviets soon or make peace with them. Platonic opposition to Soviet acts and talk of fighting will only make matters worse. Already we have provoked Stalin into doing "all the things he has been doing for the past twelve months and which have aroused suspicion and resentment in Washington and London." World peace can be had only on the "working friendship among the great powers with each acting as the center of a galaxy of small nations."

—*Justus in the* Minneapolis Star-Journal

The Demon Twins

Even if Stalin takes Europe and part of Asia, the United States need not despair. "There are many things about us the Russians like . . . The Soviet Union does not have to pursue a policy of expansive aggression to become powerful and wealthy." So if we manage to make the capitalist system work, and keep off Soviet preserves and accept the European revolution, a reconciliation between the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union is possible.

This, Mr. Scott feels, is desirable. After all, America does represent "a measure of personal liberty" absent from Russia. It is no criticism of Mr. Scott's arguments to note that he underlines precisely the ideas which the Soviet leaders would wish us to believe. Naturally, he follows the Soviet preference for peace built on a system of Big-Three coöperation and separate "zones of influence," each without outside interference. He hopes we will realize that opposing Russia would be bucking the wave of the future. Hence his conclusion: we can get along with the Soviets on their terms! This will be reassuring or alarming according to the temperament of the American reader. Some of it is, however, erroneous. Russia is protected not by Anglo-American belief that a preventive war would not succeed but from reluctance even to consider fighting a friendly ally. The Soviet peoples are separated from the Western people less by their collectivist economy than by their self-imposed isolation and denial of civil liberties. Anyway, the advent of the atomic bomb has conceivably changed the picture.

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Portrait of an Author

THE KENNETH ROBERTS READER. Introduction by Ben Ames Williams. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1945. 460 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by JOHN FARRAR

ON page 247 of this volume filled with beans and vinegar one finds:

> But I have also learned that if I should persist, when in Rome, in trying to do as the Romans do—if once or twice a day I should inhale a quarter mile or so of *fettuccini* or angels' hair, well lubricated with butter and then rendered partly non-skid by a thorough powdering of Parmesan cheese, I would soon be afflicted with dragging-down sensations, black spots before the eyes, a sharp attack of liver trouble, and a startling enlargement of the waistline.

Perhaps a better title for this highly personal selection of Mr. Roberts's good works would have been "Don't Do As the Romans Do," or "Be an Anti-Body." This is a strongly individual book. The introduction by Ben Ames Williams leaves the reader who expects a collection of historical sketches puzzled. The footnotes by Nelson Doubleday, the author's friend and publisher, are in the mood of offside reminiscence. It is only after one is well into the packed and flavorsome pages that one realizes that the book is a portrait of an author through his work rather than a representation of his work. Students of Kenneth Roberts as historical novelist would do well to seek his full-length novels, for in these selections he will find about as much of that phase of Roberts as he'd find about the institution of American marriage in Sinclair Lewis's recent vigorous romp in the hay, "Cass Timberlane."

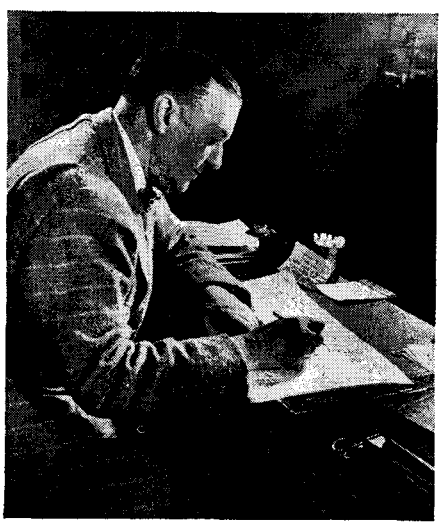
The selections from the novels are here, rich in their reportorial quality, and they make very fine reading. They are pretty grim, though, and I, for one, could have done with less prison fare, although "The Prison Hulks at Chatham," from "Captain Caution," is one of the best things in the book. Rereading these panels one becomes more than ever conscious of the author's debt to the early eighteenth century, and from the essays of opinion alongside them one fancies Mr. Roberts would rather have had an evening with Dr. Johnson or Tobias Smollett than even to have had his beans cooked in the right way, a matter which he frequently makes clear is essential for true happiness for any man.

It is perhaps the intention of the arrangement of the book that this confusion in time should exist. Since it is all, including the fiction, written in the first person, one is often puzzled as to the narrator. One is even inclined to believe that Pinkey, the winsome pup on the ship *Lively Lady,* was one of a litter from Mr. Roberts's own kennels. This is emphasized by the fact that between the engaging and mellow accounts of Mr. Roberts's dog-breeding and "Death of a Lady" from the novel "The Lively Lady," the astonished reader finds another publisher's note as follows:

> Mr. Roberts came close to carrying out his early plans when he finally built his farm in Kennebunkport. Welsh terriers from his kennels turn up all over the country; and two went to sea, one as mascot for the cruiser *Augusta;* another as mascot for the destroyer *Sutherland.*

This curious type of shuttling of time so affected my own subconscious that I found myself, just now, writing *Fighting Lady* instead of *Lively Lady.* It is a great tribute to reporter and commentator Roberts that he so plays hero to his own heroes. Somehow Arundel becomes Kennebunkport and the whole book takes on an impish character which that roguish cleric Laurence Sterne would have cherished.

Ben Ames Williams says of Mr. Roberts "he is most violent about little things, least violent about the big ones." This is true of all his work and characteristic of it. As in the work of most fine reporters, it is difficult to discover what he believes. What he feels is another matter. His likes and dislikes roar ahead of him like a military band. He attacks billboards, Oxford, Italy, fishing guides, snobs, and rabble, the generals of the American Revolution, the early American Indians, with a heavy bludgeon, swinging with roaring delight.



—*Eric Schaal*

Kenneth Roberts's "likes and dislikes roar ahead of him like a military band."

He does have some likes, along with his many-colored prejudices. Food, when it is good, is important to him. This is probably why some of his finest historical passages are concerning hunger and starvation. From the following excerpts one can see that the writer would hate to contemplate an empty belly:

> Thursday nights were big nights for the young fry in Grandmother's house, because that was the night for boiled dinner; but the biggest night of all was Saturday night. The rich scent of cooking had percolated through the house all day, and above all the other scents had risen the meaty, fruity, steamy odor of baked beans.

And again:

> My baked-bean record, to the best of my knowledge and belief, compares favorably with that of any New Englander. From my earliest years I have had what might almost be called an affinity for baked beans, especially when lubricated with homemade tomato catsup from which all sweetening has been religiously excluded.
>
> When confronted with a successful baking of beans, I have frequently attacked them enthusiastically on Saturday night, gladly repeated on Sunday morning, then toyed with two or three platefuls, cold, on Sunday evening, and made a final clean-up of the bean situation at my Monday morning breakfast.

He does, you see, believe in beans, and he believes, too, in divining rods. The closing essay in this volume is also one of the best, "Experiments with a Forked Twig." Yet, after careful proof that Roberts can again identify himself with the past and prove it by the present, working out his own water supply by the ancient method, he ends apologetically:

> I am well aware that my unhesitating acceptance of water dowsing clearly marks me, in the minds of many of my acquaintances, as a sucker. People have been heard to laugh at my stubborn credulity until their sides were sore. Thus everybody's happy; for while they have their laughs, I have my fourteen springs.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 604)

LAFCADIO HEARN:

RAINBOW BIRDS

*Humming birds have scarcely any enemy to fear except man. They are absolutely fearless of hawks and other birds of prey. . . . The little warriors always strike at the eyes of the enemy, and can fly around him like a swarm of gnats.

*Editorial in *The Item* (New Orleans), June 5, 1881, based on an article in *Harper's Magazine,* May, 1881.

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Sterne — The Man and the Writer

A FELLOW OF INFINITE JEST. By Thomas Yoseloff. New York: Prentice-Hall. 1945. 232 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by R. Ellis Roberts

WHO is the first "modern" author? If by "modern" is meant an art in which psychology has taken the place of philosophy, in which the author puts self-expression before communication, exalts manner above content, and sees the world and his fellows only as they have impressed him, there is no difficulty in answering the question. The first modern author is an Englishman who happened, as his father was a professional soldier, to be born in Clonmell, Ireland. The man we seek is the Reverend Laurence Sterne, Vicar of Sutton, Rector of Stillington, Perpetual Curate of Coxwold, Prebendary of York Minster, Master of Shandy Hall. For Sterne there is no world except Sterne's world; there are no people, only Sterne's sentiments about people. It is true that his genius is so skilful that he can make his people seem to be creations rather than comments; but their reality never takes on that alarming and fascinating independence which is the mark of the people portrayed by the great creative artists. Sterne is more successful in his avoidance of objectivity even than his closest analogue, George Moore of "Ave atque Vale"—for Moore, after all, had submitted earlier to the discipline of French naturalism.

In one way Sterne is distinct from other subjective writers—distinct even to-day when his followers have filled the libraries. It is very hard, except to a student of literary form, to enjoy Sterne the author unless you like Sterne the man. To take a very mixed group: anyone interested in his fellow creatures can enjoy Cicero's "Letters," St. Augustine's "Confessions," Montaigne's "Essays," Charles Lamb's "Essays," Casanova's "Memoirs" even if he does not like the authors. Even when the external world is subjected to their view of it, the world so subjected is recognizable as ours as well as theirs. Sterne's world is never the reader's unless the reader can identify himself with Yorick.

As I believe strongly in the virtue of sympathetic biography, I greet as the chief merit of Mr. Yoseloff's essay on Sterne his almost complete surrender to his author. This makes his biography an admirable introduction to Sterne's work, even while it is often deplorably misleading in its history of the world in which Sterne lived. To take two instances of this: when he writes of Laurence Sterne's death—writes most movingly and simply of that lonely lodging in London that was the scene of Sterne's departure—he writes of him as "the most famous man of letters in England"—and Samuel Johnson had still more than fifteen years of life. The other instance is more serious, as it leads Mr. Yoseloff to miss one of the most striking facts about Sterne's "philosophy," his adherence to a view of the

world that was being vehemently attacked in his lifetime, and that by men who, unwittingly, used some of Sterne's own ammunition. Mr. Yoseloff, introducing Sterne's visit to London in March, 1760, after the publication of "Tristram Shandy," gives an account of London which would be extravagant if it were a description of the London of Charles II, so one-sided is it.

> Morally, London was at a low ebb, and fashionable society was intent upon gratification of the senses. There was no hint of the reaction of the nineteenth century, and men and women alike enjoyed a large measure of freedom in their relations. . . . It was an age of moral and physical degradation concealed beneath a show of splendor.

Of the London of the 1760's this is monstrously untrue.

Apart from this and a few statements that show a certain unfamiliarity with London's geography—Tyburn, for example, where was St. George's cemetery, is scarcely "far out of the line of travel"—this is the best short, popular biography of Sterne that I have read. It is more vivid than Percy Fitzgerald's and less schoolmasterish than H. D. Traill's. It is very well assembled, and brings a kind of affectionate order—genuinely characteristic of Sterne—into what superficially appears to be a most disorderly life. Mr. Yoseloff is particularly good in his treatment of Sterne's friendship with Hall-Stevenson of "Crazy Tales," and of the influence of Catherine de Fourmantelle on the early volumes of "Tristram Shandy." I do not think, however, he is justified in writing of Sterne as being guilty of "open adultery" with this lady. We shall never know for certain, unless some new documents are discovered; but all the evidence—not least the evidence of his particular type of literary lubricity by innuendo—goes to suggest that with Sterne vice was an affair of sentiment and literature rather than of behavior. Again Mr. Yoseloff

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

PRISONERS IN LITERATURE

For one reason or another the ten characters in this week's quiz were prisoners at one time in their lives. How many of them do you remember? Allowing 5 points for each one you can name and another 5 for the author who created him, a score of 50 is par, 60 is very good, and 70 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 39.

1. For fourteen years he was a forgotten man on an island prison in the Mediterranean, an innocent victim of a political plot and known only as No. 34.
2. Convicted of breach-of-promise and assessed £750 damages, this indignant gentleman spent three months in debtors' prison rather than pay.
3. For killing his uncle during a quarrel this man spent the rest of his life in prison, escaping from it only in remarkably pleasant dreams.
4. Because he mistook a respectable milliner for a prostitute, this ardent young clergyman spent six months in jail for assault.
5. For seventeen years this physician lingered in the Bastille, where he occupied himself in making shoes.
6. When her husband ran off with her money and household goods, this young woman was thrown into Newgate for debt, but finally escaped with the aid of a notorious highwayman.
7. After a highly successful career of shop lifting, petty and grand larceny, and even horse stealing, this woman finally landed in Newgate and was sentenced to hang.
8. Captain of a privateer, he was captured by the Spanish and spent twenty months in prison before escaping through an enlarged rat hole.
9. Because he failed to come through with $3 on Saturday night, the landlady of this fancy notions salesman locked him in his room and stole his trousers.
10. On the eve of his execution for murder, this Shakespeare-quoting prisoner was visited by his younger sister whom he had not seen for eight years.

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is tactful in his handling of Sterne's marriage and subsequent life with Elizabeth Lumley, and delightful in his delicate account of his strong affection for his daughter.

I do not find him satisfactory in his criticism of Sterne the author. I cannot understand how anyone as sensitive to literature as is Mr. Yoseloff finds any grounds for comparing Sterne's smirking, key-hole, sly indelicacies with the frank indecencies of Chaucer or the frank improprieties of Shakespeare. Stupid as it is to attempt to ban "Tristram Shandy" for its lapses into obscenity, Sterne's oblique, slippery suggestiveness is a new thing in English literature: and to many of us an unpleasant thing, as it helped to produce the ghastly superstition that sex and physical love were a thing to snigger over in overheated boudoirs. This comparatively trivial question raises the whole problem of sentimentality and what it meant to Sterne. The answer can be found in his life, and his last, very literary, vehemently sentimental affair with Eliza Draper. Sentimentality, as Sterne invented and practised it, consists in this—the attempt to arouse in oneself an emotion by inducing the symptoms of it before the emotion is felt. When this has been done, another task is left: the practitioner must go on feeding his rather feeble emotion by a great exaggeration of the induced symptoms. If this is done, he becomes quite incapable of distinguishing between what is genuine and what is affected in his feelings. That Sterne achieved this result surely no one can doubt, and if one's gorge rises at that type of self-excitation you will never be an enthusiast for Sterne the author.

I must, however, congratulate Mr. Yoseloff for a book in which Sterne the man is presented in a way that makes it impossible not to soften towards him as a person. Whether one thinks Sterne's influence good or bad, to ignore it is to make much of modern literature unintelligible. If only for his cleverly formless form, his use of the stream of consciousness method, Sterne has had a great influence on modern letters; and to leave him out of a student's exercises is as foolish as it would be to leave out Goldsmith or Fielding or Walter Scott.

Blueprint for Global Living

ONE WORLD IN THE MAKING. By Ralph Barton Perry. New York: Current Books, Inc.,-A. A. Wyn. 1945. 288 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by WILLIAM S. LYNCH

THIS, the most recent of Ralph Barton Perry's many volumes, suggests by its title and by its dedication the justly famous "One World" of Wendell Willkie. In attitude and mood the two books bear a close resemblance to each other. But there is danger in pressing the resemblance too far. Willkie's work had about it the intensity of feeling and the naivety of discovery characteristic in some ways of such books as "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Perry's book, though an expansion of his Lowell Lectures, is a compound of long awareness and informed reasoning. Both these men have the sense of optimism that is the good man's and both of them have the sense of immediacy that today is the intelligent man's.

Two words run all through Dr. Perry's book, two words which it is nice to think are growing fashionable again, morality and conscience. Inherent in the statements that run all through his chapters is the sense of today's most bewildering paradox. While the world becomes smaller through technology and otherwise, the individual's geographic responsibilities grow larger and larger until they truly reach the limits of the earth. No longer is there any escape through remoteness and unawareness. The "unity of dwelling place" has been achieved. There remains the much more difficult task of learning to live there in peace and abundance. Professor Perry, a man of no mean ambition, sets forth "the principles and methods by which men can hope to live safely and well in this greater world."

In doing so he examines one by one the major social institutions as they apply to global life. He discusses the fundamental nature of politics, economics, law, education, art, and religion. In each he finds a moral basis, and from the tangled and mangled web of each he extracts and holds up the clean center of what is reasonable and right. At the same time he reveals the folly of the pseudo-righteous that would pass as the real. For example, the notion of enlightened self-interest, the mocking logic of which has given rise to more misshapen cant than almost any of which one can think.

There is about this analysis of world problems a quality rarely found in books of its type today. It is completely devoid of the cultism that characterizes so many studies of current affairs and absolutely unmarred by the queasy frenzy which too many of our authors regard as a substitute for honest consideration. Reading Dr. Perry's lectures, one has the sense of sitting at the feet of a sage—a word which will no doubt annoy the author, but which does carry the feeling of easy erudition, calm analysis, and clear expression which distinguish his words. Wise enough to be understanding of the queerness of men and nations, humane enough to want them better, he marshals his logic to urge a world in which the divisiveness of current economic, political, social, and religious forces can be reduced to a tolerable diversity within a basic universality. He knows that "the one big family" idea is not without its headaches, that even good neighbors can be insufferable when they are always borrowing that famous egg. Loss of privacy is one of the major costs that we must meet as the world becomes more congested and involved. But a decent and beneficial amount of individuality can be maintained by peoples and nations. There can be a cultural pluralism within a cultural world unity. "In proportion as the life of mankind is unified, there will be a culture of the world in a double sense. There will be a foundation of sameness, and there will be a community of differences."

But unity is only one aspect of the problem. There is every reason to hope that we are moving in that direction. Even the most stupid and chauvinistic can see the aeroplane in the sky, and the refrigerator ship on the sea. More pressing is the need to realize that the unity must be one of goodness and not of evil. "Worldwide conscience is the basic achievement, only partial but already revealing its form which underlies all other achievements." The writer's thesis that what we must strive for is the moral unification of the world is convincing and inspiring. As presented here it will appeal at once to the idealist and go unanswered by men who fancy that honest realism is something other than idealism. Those whose religious faith is tribal, those whose economics and politics are regional had better read it hard. Educators and artists will find a challenge as great as it is difficult to meet. For them we can only quote Charles Peguy who volunteering at the outset of the First World War is reported to have said that he considered it "ill-bred to ask for victory and not to feel like fighting."

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Counterblow in the Channel

MOST SECRET. By Nevil Shute. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1945. 310 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by
LT. ALLEN MAXWELL, U.S.N.

VAST operations of war, the clamorous days that change the history of the world—these are not subjects for Nevil Shute. A smaller canvas is his; a more readily comprehensible picture. In "Ordeal," in "Pied Piper," in "Pastoral," and now in "Most Secret" he has studied the impact of extraordinary circumstances on ordinary people. The war as it came to England was a personal thing, a matter of enemy planes over English homes and fire bombs in English streets; an experience no longer reserved for armies in the field, but become a terrible commonplace for dwellers in city flats and in country towns.

The English took it, and struck back. Retaliation had to be on a minor scale for a long time. "Most Secret" relates the story of a naval counterblow that had small beginnings indeed but grew into an affair the success of which startled even V.A.C.O. (Vice Admiral for Channel Operations).

Geneviève was the start of it. Escaped from Douarnenez and tied up in Dartmouth harbor in the summer of 1941, she was a Breton fishing boat exactly like dozens of other Breton fishing boats. It took two enterprising young Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve officers to envision what a useful and exciting life the sturdy boat could have.

Boden and Rhodes were quite different sorts. An anti-submarine officer haunted by memory of his wife's fiery death in a London air raid, Boden delighted in plans for the enemy's destruction. Rhodes, land-bound Special Branch officer, could do things with chemistry. He blamed the Germans for the death of his pet dog, the one affectionate interest in his life.

The plans for *Geneviève* did not begin to take definite shape until Charles Simon came upon the scene. He was the necessary link with "the other side." Though he had worked in France all his life, he was half English, and an English citizen; and when he escaped to England bearing vital information on the submarine pens at Lorient, he had been commissioned into the Royal Engineers.

Captain Simon brought a story over with him too—the story of Douarnenez, where Frenchmen still walked with their heads high, and cursed the Germans to their faces; a town on the brink of revolt, but bitter because it felt it was alone in its opposition to the enemy. The citizens of Douarnenez needed concrete proof that the British were still active in the war.

To give this proof—and incidentally to kill a few Germans—would be the mission of *Geneviève*. Rhodes furnished the idea that would make this seventy-footer a deadly antagonist for the *Raumboot,* the armed German vessels twice her size that stood watch over the Douarnenez fishermen at work. *Geneviève's* weapons would be two—first, surprise; and second, a giant flame-thrower mounted amidships, camouflaged as a heap of nets.

Under command of Captain Simon, with Boden and an R.N.R. lieutenant named Colvin to handle seagoing detail while Rhodes manned the flame-gun, *Geneviève* was made ready. How well she was able to fulfil her mission, the Germans on the other side could soon testify. But on her third trip over, when a searchlight blazing down upon her indicated the approach of something much bigger than a *Raumboot,* she got into a scrap that was more than she had bargained for.

"Most Secret" has moments of suspense, and single scenes of power; but as a whole the book falls short of the standard Nevil Shute set in such earlier novels as "Pied Piper" and "Pastoral." The story, told from several different viewpoints, progresses in fits and starts, and the reader must piece the episodes together to make a connected narrative. The idea of fire as a purger of evil from the earth, a weapon "to rid men from their bondage to the powers of darkness," is introduced early; but this symbolism, which might have unified the parts of the novel, is not made use of when *Geneviève* is finally brought to action.

Despite these defects, lovers of adventure will find much to please them in Nevil Shute's new novel. It is an unusual tale of remarkable events.

Nevil Shute "has studied the impact of extraordinary circumstances on ordinary people."

Small-Town Minister

THE GAUNTLET. By James Street. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1945. 311 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by THEODORE M. PURDY

LONDON WINGO, the hero of Mr. Street's homespun novel, became a Baptist preacher more from expediency than from deep conviction. Named after Jack London by a wayward father, he had something of the writer's ebullience, and it often took the abundant faith and patience of his wife Kathie to keep him reasonably within the narrow path of the church. Kathie herself was something of a modernist: her bobbed hair and insistence on the use of her nickname instead of the more sedate Katherine caused ructions when her husband was called to his first pulpit in the little town of Linden, Missouri.

In the course of the young preacher's fight against his deacons, he gains mastery of himself and for the first time feels a true vocation, but he loses his wife. Worn out and disappointed by the losing struggle against gossip and petty malice, Kathie dies of pneumonia, leaving London determined to carry on—and in Linden, not in the rich Kansas City church to which he has been called.

The portrait of Brother Wingo is obviously drawn from first-hand knowledge. Mr. Street has done his time in a Baptist seminary and knows his small-town churches. Kathie, however, is too much the child-wife to be entirely convincing as the great influence in her husband's quest. Nor is his final conversion accompanied by any very impressive signs of inward spiritual grace. One believes more in London the humanitarian and community leader.

The book does Mr. Street credit. It moves briskly and is full of well-imagined detail of Midwestern life in the twenties. It is not the author's fault that the whole subject seems more than a little outdated now, and smacks too often of the "problem novels" on religious themes which fluttered parochial dovecotes some four decades ago. It should cause discussion and controversy in the realm of Dr. Truitt's followers, but is unlikely to start much of a blaze elsewhere.

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Strictly Personal

D-DAY + 7

AN author in search of enthralling reading can pull down the shades, lock the door, and settle himself with the latest story he has written. A motion picture actor can watch himself at work until the theatre closes. But you might think that a broadcaster who is often called upon to extemporize for long periods would leave the studio weary and dazed with no clear idea of what he had said and no way of reliving the experience.

However, the broadcasting companies have devised methods which permit the broadcaster who speaks without notes to see afterward how weird his words look on paper. I have read many thousands of such words in the form in which they come from the CBS recording room, and this year Columbia has edited and made available to the public collections of news broadcasts, some of them originally ad-lib performances, under the titles "From D-Day through Victory in Europe" and "From Pearl Harbor Into Tokyo."

Recently, after spending an evening with the typed records of the broadcasts during the days the war was ending and with an assortment of letters from listeners, I found myself at the typewriter, reversing a normal process by ad-libbing on paper instead of into a microphone. What impelled me to try to recapture the mood in which I have done many extempore war broadcasts was the number of listeners who wrote, after the Japanese surrender, that they pray I shall "never have to do it again."

If their prayer is not answered, it is not likely that there will be any printed record of the broadcasts of the next war, or any people to read it. Let's look ahead a little:

COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM
CBS WORLD NEWS—Robert Trout
April 12, 195—
2:07 a.m.

TROUT: Columbia's News Headquarters in New York, Bob Trout speaking. It's a little more than two hours after midnight here in New York, and we still don't have much real news on the Pittsburgh explosion but—standing here beside the teletypewriters in the news room with the portable microphone—I'll summarize briefly for you what we do have. Just thirty-six—no, forty-six, just forty-six minutes ago, the United Press and the Associated Press almost simultaneously flashed the news that the great steel and iron city had been rocked by a tremendous explosion. Strangely—and of course we hope *not* ominously—there have been almost no details, since the flash, from Pittsburgh. What we have had is a flood of bulletins and dispatches from places as far as a hundred and eighty miles from Pittsburgh telling of brilliant lights in the sky and the huge roar of the explosion.

In a few moments we'll go over these dispatches that have come in during the past quarter of an hour. But first, I can see that—I can see through the glass wall on the other side of this news room that Paul White, Columbia's Director of Public Affairs, is at last in contact with our correspondent in Washington, so we take you now to Washington, Bill Henry reporting.

* * * * * * *

TROUT: Back in New York again. As you could hear, we are still unable to bring you a report from Washington, although—despite the lateness of the hour—that city is certainly not asleep. In fact, it was no more than half an hour ago that the International News Service reported from Washington that the lights were going on in the White House and the State Department, but there has been no dispatch of any kind from Washington since that short one from INS. I've been walking about the news room, with this portable microphone, while talking to you, and now, back at the International News Service teletypewriter—looking back over some of the tape that has come in since we took the air—but nothing at all from Washington. However, there should—just a second, here comes a bulletin. (BELLS). . . .

Over at the United Press machine now, those five bells you heard mean a bulletin just being tapped out on the UP machine. I'll read it as it comes. DETROIT, APRIL 12, U.P. DETROIT WAS SHAKEN BY A HEAVY BLAST AT 12.58 THIS MORNING. EXTENT OF THE DAMAGE IS NOT YET KNOWN BUT THE INDICATIONS ARE IT WILL BE HEAVY AND IT IS FEARED THAT A NUMBER OF PERSONS LOST THEIR LIVES. ALTHOUGH THE EXACT LOCATION AND NATURE OF THE ACCIDENT HAVE NOT BEEN REVEALED, CITY OFFICIALS STATE THAT AN INVESTIGATION IS UNDER WAY TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER THE BLAST MIGHT HAVE ANY CONNECTION WITH THE EXPLOSION REPORTED EARLIER FROM PITTSBURGH. MORE. There is more coming, as the—more coming from Detroit, but not at the moment, for, after printing that one word "more" the United Press machine has gone back to transmitting the continuation of a story on ladies' fashions—the usual kind of thing that can be expected normally at this hour of the night. HATS, TOO, WILL BE MORE EXTREME WITH THE ACCENT ON DEVASTATING ALLURE THIS SUMMER—that's enough of that at this moment of suspense and tension.

This is a good time to repeat that we are not sure yet just what has happened, and while, unfortunately, it does seem that a disaster has occurred, still, no good purpose would be served by becoming excited prematurely. At any rate, there is nothing to do at the moment except wait for the news.

Our Columbia news staff is being assembled as rapidly as possible. Major George Fielding Eliot, who used to be known as Columbia's *military* analyst back in the days when men still fought wars, should be with us here in the news room very shortly. Perhaps he has been delayed by the rather unseasonable thunder storm that seems to be rolling in from the direction of New Jersey. You have probably been able to hear, above the clatter of the new machines, the loud booms of thunder that have been resounding across the Hudson River into this news room and this microphone.

As we are still unable—I beg your pardon. Yes? I have just been informed that, according to the Associated Press, an emergency call has gone out to all fire-fighting equipment and ambulances in towns as far north as Havre de Grace, Maryland. I'd better repeat that—towns as far north as Havre de Grace, Maryland. That's the wording of the message just handed me. I can't be sure just what it means, but I am told now that this in-

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formation—incomplete, as you can see—was telephoned to us by the AP offices in New York. Something wrong with the AP wires where?—south of Trenton? Yes, the Associated Press sent over that brief report by telephone as there is some trouble with the regular wire circuit between New York and Philadelphia. That one sentence doesn't tell us much but there will be more to follow as soon as the AP gets it; I don't know exactly *how* they are getting it. We shall see, later. Until a few moments ago, the teletype here, which is connected with the AP building right in New York City, was ticking away——it seems to have stopped now. In fact, there is a general lull. The other machines have fallen silent also, temporarily; not often that it is so quiet in this office.

Perhaps, at this point, I should read you the accumulation of earlier dispatches from places *outside* Pittsburgh. Mostly, they are extremely vague, very few hard facts, and in none of them is there any hint of—any hint of hostilities; I started to say "war," but even the word "hostilities" sounds completely out of place—fantastic, utterly unbelievable in these modern times.

Still, without wishing to cause any unnecessary alarm, still there is something odd about this unusual quiet in this usually noisy room. Accidents—train wrecks, floods, and explosions—don't usually cut off the flow of news; on the contrary. Every news machine in the entire room remains silent, which I report as a fact, not to cause any—well, panic. That is a harsh word, "panic," but perhaps not too strong judging from the fashion in which our telephone switchboard, here at Columbia, has been tied up since the first flash at—at exactly twenty-one minutes past one o'clock, New York time. Apparently, many of those who heard the first news on Columbia were not listening carefully, for there has been no official word—no unofficial suggestion, even—that any kind of war might have begun.

The Second World War ended a good many years ago, and since then mankind has progressed in many fields, until . . . (SEVERAL SENTENCES MISSING—BROADCAST INTERRUPTED) . . . and the jagged edges of girders . . . windows smashed and the smoke pouring in now. As soon as the lights stop flickering. . . .

ROBERT TROUT.

Ballade of the Bloodthirsty Reader

By Ethel Jacobson

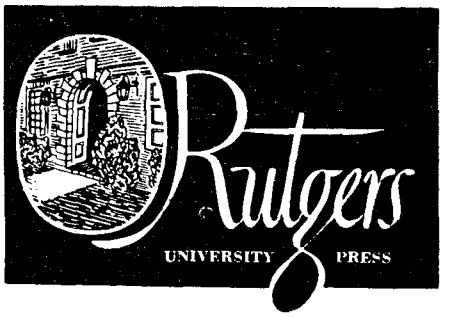
WHAT is so rare as a day in June?
A night in winter as black as tar
When the wild gale howls like a wounded loon
And the lightning splinters a deodar
And who's curled up by the fire? You are,
With a temperance tract by Ella Boole
Or a worn Britannica, RAYN to SARR. . . .
(I want a corpse in the crocodile pool.)

You, I know, read a Celtic rune,
Something abstruse, profound, bizarre,
To stir your mind in its snug cocoon;
You read the papers of FDR;
But give me the clue of the scarlet scar,
Strychnine bought by some thrifty ghoul
In the large, economy, two-quart jar:
I want a corpse in the crocodile pool!

Pliny, Jr.'s a priceless boon,
But where in his whole dull repertoire
Does he bop the bride on her honeymoon,
Does he trace the ash from the Fiend's cigar?
Where is the zombie from Zanzibar,
The gat in Grandmother's reticule,
The Document (forged), the Murder Car . . . ?
I want a corpse in the crocodile pool.

L'ENVOI

Poetry? Ho! Politics? Har!
I'm of the bitter-almonds school.
The juicy-jab-in-the-jugular.
I want a corpse in the crocodile pool.



Are *these* our Founding Fathers?

WE DON'T quite know which way to turn. When your idols come tumbling down, you're sometimes tempted to turn to drink. But not us. *That's* what happened to our idols.

Maybe we've been naive. We've always thought of the founders of this Republic as stolid, earnest, hard-working men of stern and sober ways—something like the early Romans or the doughty settlers of New Jersey whose story we read in RURAL HUNTERDON.[1] Their lives always seemed to stand as precept and example, for us their dissolute descendants. It certainly never entered our minds to think of colonial *mores* as anything even approaching Bacchanal. Why, the only low-lifes around in those days who drank were the Hessians—and everybody knows what happened to *them.*

How, then, to face the discomfiting fact that our Revolutionary ancestors spent many a long eighteenth century evening cooking up some of the most potent brews anyone's Founding Fathers ever—er—guzzled. To make matters worse, the awful truth came out in one of our own books. A particularly mouth-watering chapter of PLOUGHS AND POLITICKS[2] lists some of their recipes, alcoholic and otherwise, to wit: *To Make Turtle out of a Shoulder of Veal; To Souse a piggs head; To Fine down Wine; To Make a Barrill of Mead; To make Baum beer (an exceedg pleasant drink).*

One recipe in particular is strikingly modern. That is, certain of our acquaintances who know about such things tell us it resembles a cocktail known as the *Daiquiri.* At any rate, the Founding Father who set down the ingredients was evidently proving the pudding whilst he wrote—as the humiliating record shows. He called his concoction *Shrubb:*

To Every Pint of Limejuice add one pound of Loaf white powder Sugar, & 1 pint of Rum. This mak agreeable & Cheap punch you may add rum when you make yr Punch—& fresh Lime juice. 600 Limes squeezed 11 pints of Juice took 12 lb. Sugar . . . The remaining directions—and at this we hang our heads—trail off into an illegible scrawl.

Of course, we really shouldn't be so shocked. Wasn't one of the battles in the Revolution fought for the possession of *Brandywine?*

1. **RURAL HUNTERDON**
by Hubert G. Schmidt, $3.50

2. **PLOUGHS AND POLITICKS**
by Carl Raymond Woodward, $5.00

At all bookstores
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY PRESS
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ATOMIC POWER IN WAR AND PEACE

The author of the following guest editorial is Chairman of the Department of Physics and Dean, Division of Physical Sciences, and Director of Metallurgical Laboratory, University of Chicago.

WORLD government is now inevitable. The choice we have is whether this government will be one agreed upon by the peoples of the world, or whether the great nations will elect to fight the catastrophic third war that will settle who is master. In world unity by agreement lies greater life. In the unity forced by another war lies death to millions and disaster to all mankind.

The atomic age will be a period of keenest rivalry. The rivalry is between nations and social systems. The prize to be won is prosperity and world leadership. It can include peace and security. If only we agree to place war beyond the power of nations, the race is sure to make life of greater value throughout the world.

Atomic power is just one more step along the path of technological progress. It may be the supreme gift of physical science to the modern age. Clearly its value will be determined by the use to which it is put. It is noteworthy, however, that along with other technical advances the effect of atomic power is to force human society into new patterns.

Let me note briefly three such effects of technology on society that are clearly recognizable.

1. The society that is adapted for survival in the modern world is one in which coöperation occurs between diverse groups spread over large areas. As an example, consider the atomic bomb project, in which about a million people of all types and descriptions and spread throughout the nation worked together to achieve a needed result that could only be achieved by a great, coördinated community.

2. The need for ever increasing training and education at all levels of society. It is because of the mechanical skill of many millions of workers, the know-how of our many technical men, and the administrative skill of our industrial and military leaders that our country has come out ahead in this war as in the last. It is no disparagement of the American engineers who have done these great tasks to point out that most of the new wartime developments that have led to victory, such as radar, submarine detection, rockets, and especially the atomic bomb, have had to be led by men whose scientific knowledge is far in advance of that supplied by our technical schools and industries in the training of engineers. To compete in the modern world more people need more training. Nor is this technical training all that is required. Of greater importance is more education for leadership. In a democratic society that is forced into a position of world prominance, our citizens as well as our leaders need to understand something about the problems and human needs of all the nations.

3. Only that society can be strong whose objectives include developing the full usefulness of all of its people in enriching the common life. We have come to realize that our greatest strength lies in the many millions of our citizens who are working efficiently and loyally at the nation's tasks. Widespread education, encouragement of each individual to see for the place of the game where he can play best, opportunity for advancement and leadership — all these have helped to strengthen our society. In the new atomic age, when social systems are going through a fiercely competitive phase, it is necessary for us to maintain our fullest strength.

The evolutionary law of the survival of the fittest applies to societies as well as to individuals. According to this law the society of the future will inevitably advance along these lines of coöperativeness, of education, and of promoting the service of its individuals toward the common welfare. If selfish interest or an ill-adapted form of government should prevent our growth along these lines, some other nation or group that can develop thus more rapidly will pass us by.

You will note that these factors which give strength to society are precisely those that characterize the highest type of citizen. Coöperation: He likes to work with others on a common task. Education: He has learned to do his own useful task and to share intelligently in solving public problems. Service: The central objective of his life is to contribute to the common welfare the maximum that his abilities make possible.

My point is this, that the development of the atomic bomb is merely the most recent important step of that steady progression of science that is compelling man to become human. He must pay careful attention to coöperation, education, and the welfare of society if he is to thrive under the conditions that science imposes. If we will let ourselves grow as thus indicated, the civilization of the atomic age promises to be the richest that history has known, not only with regard to material bounty but also in its cultivation and appreciation of the truest human values.

THE major immediate consequences of atomic power can thus be described as four:

1. It makes inevitable a world government. If we are wise, we shall take immediate steps to form this government by international agreement instead of waiting for a third world war of unparalleled destructiveness to determine the ruler of the world.

2. Until this world government is established, the United States should limit its defense preparations to ability to reply to any attack that may be made against us with such strength as to devastate our enemy's important surface installations. This is a defense objective which we can achieve without seriously straining our national resources.

3. The most important immediate peaceful application of atomic energy is that of supplying heat and power from large installations, especially in areas where power is now relatively expensive. The indications are that for such purposes atomic power will before many years be competing with coal on favorable terms. These and other applications of atomic processes may have considerable effect in extending our industrial frontiers.

4. The best assurance of national safety in the atomic age, both before and after the establishment of a world government, is to develop the nation's maximum human and industrial strength. This requires keeping all essential industries vigorously alive, and enabling every citizen by appropriate training and employment to contribute to the common welfare as his abilities may permit.

Because of the critical problems that the release of atomic energy has helped to precipitate, urgent attention is needed to the education of wise leaders, to the cultivation of a desire to coöperate on our common tasks, and to the growth of a spirit of human service.

A. H. Compton.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Attention, Clevelanders

SIR: I am forming a *Saturday Review of Literature* Club in Cleveland. The idea is to meet bi-weekly to discuss the leading article in the review. If there are interested subscribers to your review living in Cleveland who would like to join let them communicate with me at the Main Library.

L. H. GERGELY.

Cleveland, Ohio.

Reviewing the Reviewers

SIR: Perhaps Sinclair Lewis gave a lift to that sort of thing when, in cutting Mr. De Voto down to size, he reverted to childishness by calling out, "Smarty! Smart-Alec!" Mr. Lewis has been doing the same thing in *Esquire*, so perhaps the tendency can be regarded as a habit with caricaturists.

Now I note that T. V. Smith succumbs to the same infantile temptation in reviewing Alsberg's "Let's Talk About the Peace" [*SRL*, Sept. 29]. Probably, in his adult passages, Mr. Smith judges Alsberg's work correctly, but there is no dignity in a review that contains such tripe as this: "The book, it will be noted by any reader, does not suffer from intellectual modesty." Anyone who knows T. V. could note the same thing about him, and, it might be added in justice to both reviewer and reviewed, about almost any person of sufficient intellect to be articulate. Every man who offers his thoughts to others thinks well of himself. Neither reviewers nor critics offer much to readers when they yell "Smarty!" Editors might save paper by cutting such irrelevant puerilities from copy.

Against the background of human experience with moralists and "spiritualists," one wonders just what critical values can be attached to the phrases "spiritual values" or "spiritual leadership" which appear so often and so uselessly in the pages of the *SRL*. Mr. Brandt's excellent criticism of scholars is weakened by that sort of ambiguity; Mumford drools with spirits in almost every issue; other reviewers use references to "spiritual" this or that.

Are we to suppose that there was a time in human history when something of "spiritual value" existed? If so, when? Does medievalism illustrate the social benefits of such value? If so, give me the present chaos. "Spirit" is not only, as perhaps Nietzsche indicated, "immaterial"; it is also a nice little weasel word that can mean almost anything. Reviewers could cultivate a bit of semantic clarity by giving their own versions of what they mean by "spiritual." Otherwise, readers might consider the meaning to be anything from rum, through Romanism, to rebellion. As a philosopher, I am inclined to doubt very much that any of your reviewers has given the subject enough solid thought to know what he means. They toss off that silly phrasing as though they had just recently tossed down too many spirits.

LESLIE EVAN SCHLYTTER.

Chicago, Ill.

THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"So I say Forty-five Fifty—or Fifty-five whatever it is—or Fight!"

Plus and Minus

SIR: In her review of Sinclair Lewis's "Cass Timberlane" [*SRL*, Oct. 6] Mrs. Colum hits the nail squarely on the head with her little hammer when she writes: "We all call Sinclair Lewis a satirist, but what he really is is a caricaturist." That one sentence is worth more than hundreds of columns of run-of-the-mill book-reviewing.

In the same issue A. G. Keller purports to tell us what Darwin really said. Now if only someone will tell us what A. G. Keller really said we shall, in the language of a Southern Congressman, know where we are really at.

ROBERT RIVES LA MONTE.

New York, N. Y.

"Modern Man Is Obsolete"

SIR: Concerning your recent editorial "Modern Man Is Obsolete" [*SRL*, Aug. 18], I would like to state that I am in disagreement with your basic proposition, that war is not a reflection of man's nature, but an expression of it. There are far too many instances of a collective and an individual manifestation of a warlike instinct in man to disregard them.

But even granting your assumption that war is an expression of man's nature, there are other points in your editorial which are doubtful. For example, you state that man must make certain changes, and that the basic condition necessary to these changes can be met by stimulating the instinct for self-preservation. Now it is true that changes can be made by stimulating this elemental instinct; however, there is no guarantee that these changes will be in the right direction. They could result in a greater recourse to reason, which of course would be desirable, or they could also result in a panicky expression of emotion. The instinct for self-preservation was most certainly stimulated in those who were trapped in the Cocoanut Grove fire in Boston a few years back; however, the results of such a stimulation were far from desirable. Is there any reason to assume that a similar response of world-wide proportions would not occur if the instinct of self survival were stimulated on a world-wide basis?

No, my friend, I am afraid that the human race is doomed. Nor is such a fate necessarily bad. The scales of history show the balance overwhelmingly tipped in favor of the malefic content of human nature. The entire existence of man is tinged with a conduct that would make us unwelcome visitors anywhere in the universe.

CPL. FRANK J. THRASHER, JR.,
Army Air Forces.

Thorp and Cowboy Songs

SIR: Donald Day's tribute to John Lomax ["John Lomax and His 10,000 Songs," *SRL*, Sept. 22], is further evidence of the broad literary outlook and catholicity of interest shown by *The Saturday Review of Literature* in recent years.

Professor Lomax has brought to the attention of students and the general public the variety of Eastern and Southern folk songs, and the Archive of American Folk Song will remain a

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monument to his imagination and industry. The authorship of many of these songs has been established, and where established all honor should be accorded the originators of what became "folk songs" ascribed to anonymous sources. "Little Joe the Wrangler" is a case in point. It is probably the best-known Western ballad and is sung from the Mexican border to the Canadian. More than 375,000 phonograph records of the song have been sold.

The author was Howard N. ("Jack") Thorp, a cowboy and rancher who lived in Santa Fe and Albuquerque, New Mexico, and who was the first collector of cowboy songs. His first song hunt was in the spring of 1889, and it covered cow camps from Roswell, New Mexico, to Ringold, Texas. In 1908, "Jack" Thorp printed twenty-four of these ballads at Estancia, New Mexico, under the title "Songs of the Cowboys." Modesty kept him from claiming five of them as his own, but in his later volume, printed by Houghton Mifflin in 1921, he documented not only his own compositions but to the best of his knowledge the authorship for many of the others.

Thorp died in 1940, and this year a book he prepared in collaboration with Neil M. Clark has been published by the Caxton Printers of Caldwell, Idaho, its title "Pardner of the Wind." The chapter called "Banjo in the Cow Camp," first printed in *The Atlantic Monthly*, is one of the best accounts ever written of how cowboy songs were composed and sung and collected. "Jack" Thorp was a memorable figure. I might add that neither he nor his estate has ever pocketed a penny from the sheet music or recordings of his famous song "Little Joe the Wrangler."

T. M. Pearce.

University of New Mexico,
Albuquerque, N. M.

Ancestral Voices

Sir: Probably the two most constant and pressing matters now in the minds of American people are our future relations with Russia and the future of war under the threat of the atomic bomb.

Two striking utterances of more than a hundred years ago have come to my attention in the last month. In the new edition of De Tocqueville's "Democracy in America" edited by Phillips Bradley appears what to me is an amazing passage on the United States and Russia—all the more amazing because it was first published in January, 1835:

> There are at the present time two great nations in the world, which started from different points, but seem to tend towards the same end. I allude to the Russians and the Americans. Both of them have grown up unnoticed; and while the attention of mankind was directed elsewhere, they have suddenly placed themselves in the front rank among the nations, and the world has learned their greatness and their existence at the same time.
>
> All other nations seem to have nearly reached their natural limits, and they have only to maintain their power; but these are still in the act of growth. All others have stopped, or continue to advance with extreme difficulty; these are alone proceeding with ease and celerity along a path to which no limit can be perceived. The American struggles against the obstacles that nature opposes to him; the adversaries of the Russian are men. The former combats the wilderness and savage life; the latter, civilization and all its arms. The conquests of the American are therefore gained by the plowshare; those of the Russian by the sword. The Anglo-American relies upon personal interest to accomplish his ends and gives free scope to the unguided strength and common sense of the people; the Russian centers all the authority of society in a single arm. Their starting point is different and their courses are not the same; yet each of them seems marked out by the will of Heaven to sway the destinies of half the globe.

The other citation is even older. On June 7, 1782, Benjamin Franklin wrote to Joseph Priestley, discoverer of oxygen, or "dephlogisticated air," as he called it, virtually exiled from England and America because of his liberal political and religious views. Franklin's letter followed hard upon the battle between the French fleet under Admiral De Grasse and the British under Admiral Rodney:

> Perhaps you have not heard the recent news from West India, news that shows us how the gods above look down upon us human beings. A young angel was sent down to this world on some business and had as his guide and courier an older angel. They arrived over the seas of Martinicio (Martinique) in the middle of the long day of obstinate fight between the fleets of Rodney and De Grasse. When, through the clouds of smoke, he saw the fire of the guns, the decks covered with mangled limbs and bodies of the dying, the ships sinking, the misery and pain of the crews yet left alive, the young angel turned to his guide and said:
>
> "You blundering blockhead, you are ignorant of your business; you undertook to conduct me to the earth, and you have brought me into hell!"
>
> "No, sir," said the guide, "I have made no mistake; it is really the earth, and these are men. Devils never treat one another in this cruel manner; they have more sense, and more of what men (vainly) call humanity."

Surely we can say that all that history teaches us is that history teaches us nothing.

George Lawrence Parker.

Carver, Mass.

Ever Been a Chump?

Sir: Bennett Cerf recently [*SRL*, Sept. 15] called attention to some circus slang compiled by M. I. Pitkin in Webster's house organ *The Circle and Monogram*.

I'm afraid that Mr. Pitkin is either confused or has been misinformed. For example, a novice clown is described as a "first-of-May" and a second-season clown is a "Johnny-come-lately." After that the clowns are "Joeys" or "whitefaces." That description is wrong. Any person around a circus for the first time in his life is either a "first-of-May" or a "Johnny-come-lately," whichever you choose to call him. A clown is always a "Joey," be he "first-of-May" or veteran clown.

Customers are never called gillies, rubes, or suckers. They are either towners or chumps. The term "lot lice" is a carnival expression, and is never used around a circus. Incidentally, there is a vast difference between circus and carnival people.

Wendell Goodwin.

Trenton, N. J.

Not an Aristocrat

Sir: In George F. Milton's review of the "Age of Jackson" [*SRL*, Sept. 29], he calls Jackson "the aristocrat of the Hermitage."

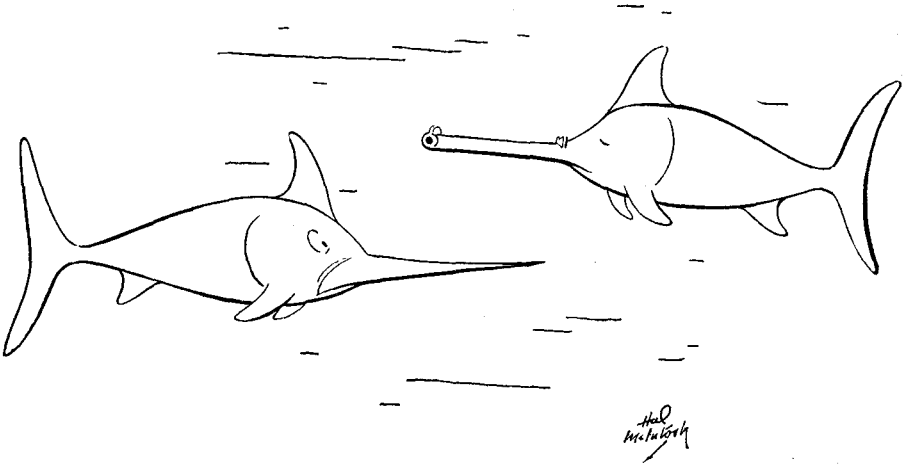
Jackson was not an aristocrat in any sense of the word. If he were alive I feel he would resent being called one for his hold on the American people was because he was not.

Calling Jackson an aristocrat actually detracts from his greatness as it would in the case of Lincoln if he were called one.

The descendants of Jackson and Lincoln can be called aristocrats but not they.

James K. Parsons.

San Antonio, Texas.



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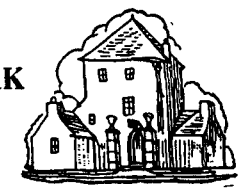

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THE BIRTHPLACE
THE BEAST IN THE JUNGLE
THE JOLLY CORNER

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TRADE Winds

THE 265TH SESSION of the Columbia Broadcasting System's outstanding program on books, "Invitation to Learning," was devoted to a discussion of Boccaccio's "The Decameron," and the studio announcer was so carried away by lascivious anticipation that he described Chairman Marvin Lowenthal as "the distinguished scholar and lecherer." Mr. Lowenthal, however, had taken the precaution of surrounding himself with two recognized models of ultra-respectability and decorum —a Prof. Irwin Edman and a Mr. Bennett Cerf—and the proceedings were so innocuous that a spy at the headquarters of the New York Vice Suppression Society described them as "the last blows to Sumner."

There was just one touchy moment when I felt an irresistible urge to retell the story of "Putting the Devil in Hell." In the control room, Mr. Leon Levine, the guardian-angel of "Invitation to Learning," whipped out a razor and prepared to cut his throat. In the nick of time, however, my innate sense of propriety, plus a menacing baseball bat in the chairman's hand, brought this synopsis to an abrupt close, and Irwin carried the ball out of the danger zone with a neatly-executed dissertation on Boccaccio's influence on Renaissance thought.

The tale to which I refer, as the more erudite among you may recall, is the tenth story of the third day, and concerns the desire of a beautiful Capuan maiden named Alibech to throw off temptations, and "put the devil in hell." In the desert of Thebaïs, a lusty young hermit named Rustico, overcome by her purity of mind and perfection of chassis, devises a method of accomplishing the feat—again and again and again—that works out in the most satisfying manner for both Alibech and himself. The details of his method, unfortunately, are printed invariably in Italian. The translator for the Modern Library edition explains gravely that "the disuse into which this form of magic has fallen makes it impossible to render the technicalities into tolerable English," or, in other words, "Cheese it, the Post Office Authorities." I daresay that these two pages in a book written over five hundred years ago have been responsible for the sale of more Italian-American dictionaries than all the Berlitz schools put together, and that "Putting the Devil in Hell," plus Chaucer's "Miller's Tale," are the stories remembered best by five of every six students of college literature courses the country over.

When I first went to work for Horace Liveright in 1923, "The Decameron" was still regarded generally as contraband, or under-the-counter, merchandise. It was obtainable only in a badly printed edition, bound in cheap red cloth, uniform with those other then-forbidden plums, "Droll Stories," "Mlle. de Maupin," and "Madame Bovary." Within a space of five or six years, all of these books were sold freely in a dozen low-priced reprint editions, and regarded by the cynical, flask-toting young fry of the period as no more titillating than the Little Elsie books.

"The Decameron" goes on as a formidable best-seller, however, not because of its salaciousness, but because it is a collection of wonderful stories—a superlative anthology in a day when even the sleaziest miscellany commands a ready market. In the words of J. A. Symonds, "'The Decameron' glows with the joyousness of a race discarding dreams for reality, proclaiming the empire of the senses, scorning the terrors of a bygone creed." It is the source of Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice" and "Romeo and Juliet," Chaucer's "Troilus and Cressida," and Longfellow's "Tales of a Wayside Inn," not to mention a score of latterday bedroom farces and hundreds of brazen rewrites in the "confession" and "true story" magazines. It is so wonderful a book that some day an enterprising American publisher is going to offer it in a decent modern English translation....

"Red Ruffing [left] mistook Harry Ruby for the bat boy," then posed for this picture "as a peace offering."

WHEN IRWIN EDMAN was in Rio de Janeiro recently, seated next to a fascinating Brazilian society queen at a dinner, she asked him what he did in New York. "I am a professor of philosophy," he informed her. "How interesting!" she replied. "Down here there is only one American philosopher we really know about." "What's his name?" inquired Irwin. The lady answered, "Lin Yutang." . . . Another story from South of the Border comes from Marietta Daniels. Of all the celebrations touched off by V-J Day, it appears that the one in Bolivia was the most exuberant and unrestrained. "It is understandable that our people are especially joyous," explained a government official gravely. "This is the first war Bolivia has ever won!" . . .

I WAS WITH Harry Ruby, the famous song and letter writer, and rabid baseball enthusiast, on just about the happiest day of his life this summer. Between games of a torrid Yankee-Tiger double-header, the Yank manager, Joe McCarthy, told him he could don a New York uniform and work out the following afternoon with the Bronx Bombers. "Just wait," boasted Harry, "till McCarthy finds out the only things I don't excel at are hitting, fielding, and running! But if he thinks he's gonna sign me up without a hefty bonus, he's nuts!" The work-out was an unqualified success, except for the fact that Red Ruffing, the Yankee pitching ace, mistook Harry for the bat boy. He posed for a picture with him as a peace offering (see cut herewith). Harry wouldn't swap the original for a Van Gogh. Dan Parker thinks that Ruby disguised himself as a Detroit regular and played in the Tiger outfield in the World Series.

Ruby has had his ups and downs in Hollywood. He didn't show up on one job for three years. "From the time I found out they don't like that sort of thing out here, it was easy sailing," he says. His favorite ball-player (and he knows them all) is Satchel Paige, the perennial Negro pitching ace. Satchel was still slinging them in there on his fiftieth birthday. "How do you do it?" marveled Harry. "Easy enough," replied Paige. "I jest ain't never et anything at all what wasn't fried." After all, this was probably just as good an explanation as any. As far as baseball managers are concerned, Ruby rates the late John McGraw, of the Giants, as master of them all. "When McGraw gave an order," he says, "it was either obeyed—or else. One day he sent a batter up to bunt. Instead the batter laid into the first pitch, hit it over the fence, and won

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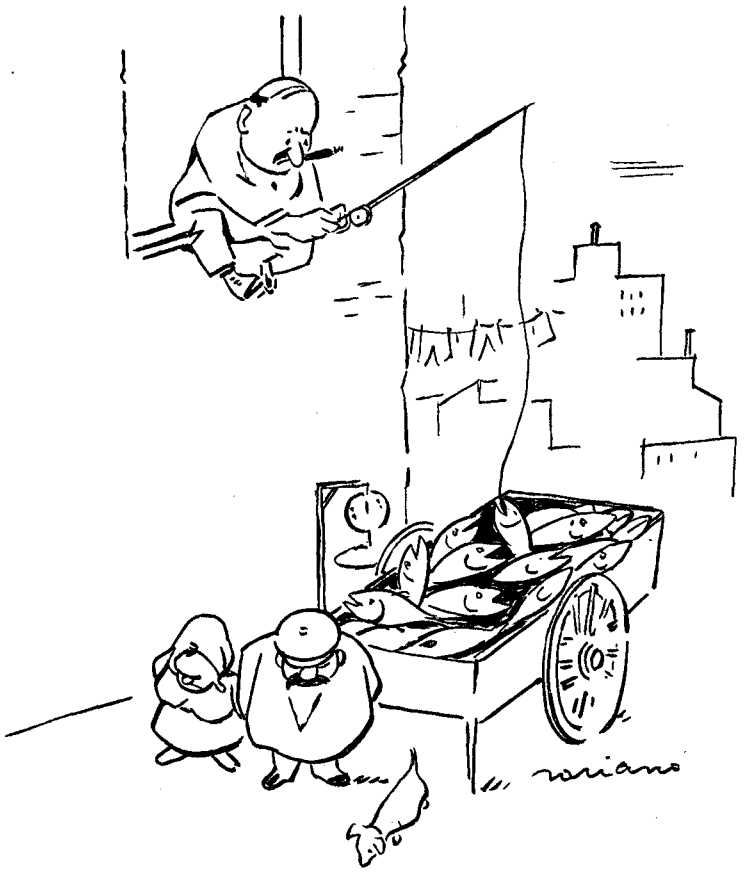

the game for the Giants. The fans were cheering themselves hoarse as the player jogged into the dugout. McGraw looked at him with disgust and said, 'You're fired.' He was released the next day." . . .

WHEN TOM CLARK became Attorney General he had a suggestion box tacked up outside his office, explaining that he definitely was not the inaccessible type of executive, and would welcome any tips to improve the efficiency of his department. The first evening the box contained a single suggestion. It read, "Your ties are much too loud for an Attorney General, and your wife's hair-do is much too exotic." The Clarks didn't think this was very funny, and detailed two crack operatives to discover the identity of their disrespectful critic. It took them three full days, but the culprit was cornered. He was the Clarks's fourteen-year-old son. . . . Hugh Kelly's son Edward, aged eight, passes up Buck Rogers and Superman in favor of *True Comics* and *Timeless Topix*. The latter is sponsored by the publishers of *Catholic Digest*, and leans to stories about saints and martyrs. The other night Edward advised his four brothers and sister, "These holy comics are the berries: murder and everything!" . . . Hugh Kelly's Whittlesey House, incidentally, will publish R. E. Gould's "Yankee Storekeeper," the experience of a Maine retailer, in the spring. This series of books about typical small-town characters has turned out to be a goldmine. . . .

COLSTON LEIGH could do worse than sign Lieut. R. S. Stafford for a country-wide lecture tour, to judge by a clipping Mildred White Wells has sent me from the *Deland* (Fla.) *Sun-News*. "Lt. Stafford," it reads, "gave the Lions an interesting insight into activities of a bombing mission from start to finish, as he illustrated one over Europe carried out by radar direction, at their meeting last night at Hutchinson Hall. He practically carried his audience with him on a mission over Germany and all but four returned safely." . . . George Hecht, general manager of the expanding Doubleday retail bookstore chain, gives two reasons why booksellers heartily second the plea that publishers continue manufacturing small-sized books: One, the reduced size makes it possible for a customer to buy two to four times as many books as he used to, and carry his purchase home without staggering under the load; Two, the question of space is usually a vital one in a book shop, and the smaller book enables the proprietor to stock a larger number and a greater variety of titles, thus serving both himself and the book-buying public.

Doesn't that make it just about unanimous?

BENNETT CERF.

"From where I sit"

FOR a guy who likes his year two parts spring, one part summer, and one part spring, **The Kenneth Roberts Reader** came as something of a shock to me. Almost everything about the book except Italy is North, and some of the selections frost-bite your fingers as you turn the page. But this was not disappointing to me because every time Kenneth Roberts writes, he lights a fire. His characters in their own turn fight, and march, and curse, and kill, to keep warm, and in this new age of atomic energy it could be observed that the heat products of his Doc Means, Benedict Arnold, Cap Huff, Rogers, not to mention the bitter energy of battle are enough to warm any reader's appetite to the heaping portions of living served in **The Kenneth Roberts Reader.**

And speaking of heaping portions, there is *An Inquiry Into Diets* reprinted from **For Authors Only,** a calory-conscious inquiry, a selection from **Northwest Passage** entitled *Hot Buttered Rum,* and one called *Grandma's Kitchen.* In fact, in every sense, this **Reader** presents a well-balanced diet, there being a just portion of almost every facet of the author's facile mind. He tells of *Country Life in Italy,* of *The Prison Hulks at Chatham,* of *The Glories of War,* of his desire for *The Little Home in the Country.* He speaks with wit and wisdom of education and the set-up at Oxford, a notable contrast to our own educational system. "The basis of all Oxford education is reading," he says. "Students do not attend classes or recitations. They read."

But these are only a few of the things in this **Reader.** There is a sort of poignant essay mixed with the pride of personal achievement, the sharp memories of agony, and the humor that comes after you have passed safely through the rigors of ordinary living. I refer to the article called *It Must Be Your Tonsils.* After having had his tonsils "tonsillectomied" at a tender age, Mr. Roberts arrived in England in 1933 only to find that that country's best tonsillectomicians were delighted to find "an infinitesimal speck of pallid moisture" on one of those wooden say-aahs. Evading the issue through three countries, he finally returned to America to undergo a local anesthetic and a sensation which he describes as "somewhat similar to that of scraping a cluster of wax drippings from a coat sleeve with a knife blade."

paul

DOUBLEDAY, DORAN

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Seeing Things

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

MY wife had planned it carefully. Before that Saturday was over, we were to learn the afternoon was to take far more than careful planning.

"Movies in the front hall here?" I had asked, thinking back to those earlier birthday parties where, with a borrowed machine and six chairs of Baby Bear size, we had quieted the young until suppertime with rented films of Mickey Mouse and Felix the Cat.

"Dear me, no. At nine? They're much too old for that. He's asking them here for lunch, not supper this year. Eight of them. Then, I thought we'd take them to the Rodeo."

"The Rodeo?" I gasped, looking tired already.

"Of course. They'll love it. Besides, it'll get them out of the apartment."

I knew what she meant. Any parent would know. So would any house-owner who was not a professional wrecker. I remembered the growing damage of those earlier parties as gradually the pureed peas and scrambled eggs had given way to meat balls and peas unpureed. Although less and less milk had been sloshed on the table, the noise and debris had swelled each year as the first conversational goo-goos had changed into the constant roar of simulated ack-ack. The wide-open spaces of Madison Square Garden were an inspiration.

"A wonderful idea," said I. "I'll get the tickets today."

They were asked for twelve-thirty. This meant, of course, that most of them came at twelve. The doorbell began ringing then with a violence grown-ups are unable to muster. They arrived when my wife and I, as exiles from the diningroom, were still gobbling a quick lunch on trays in the livingroom.

Illness had taken a lighter toll than usual. Only one of the eight was missing. The others turned out to be either classmates in school, or Park friends since the buggy-pushing days of long ago. Some of them wore short trousers under their blue jackets, some long—their first long pants. Although those so encased resembled pygmies seen through the wrong end of opera glasses, they felt superior. You sensed this the moment they appeared. They sported the happy look of the recently promoted. They were burdened by the same self-consciousness, too.

Three were deposited by their nurses; three by their mothers. "When can we expect him home?" each nurse or mother invariably demanded. "Not until five-thirty or so," my wife or I would say. Thereupon the faces of these women changed imperceptibly. A telltale suggestion of relief—or was it gratitude?—brightened their eyes. As a storm signal, this should have been warning enough.

The first fifteen minutes were occupied with the presentation and inspection of presents. Every time the bell rang, the birthday-boy would scamper down the hall, accompanied by his four-year-old brother. The latter, because of having been included in such venerable company, could not have been prouder had he met Eisenhower.

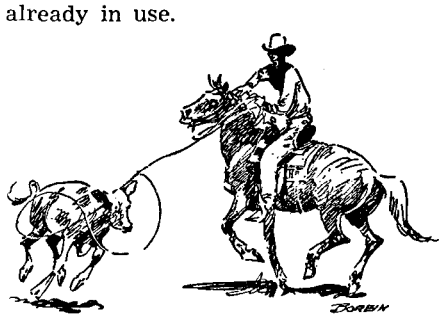
"Hi, Alfred!" "Hi, David!" Or "Hi, Harold!" the two boys would call, with arms outstretched. Before any answers could be given, and the prepared speech regretfully made, the presents were snatched from the bestowing hand, and a race started to the nine-year-old's bedroom.

My wife and I stayed in the livingroom as a rather unwelcome welcoming committee. Everything seemed to be going satisfactorily back in his room, until the air was atomized by sudden shrieks.

"I wanna come in! I wanna come in!"

It was the little fellow's voice. He was bawling, his heart broken. After a few minutes I could stand neither his agony nor my own. Following Ford's example, I went on a peace mission.

"What's the matter?" I demanded, pushing past him and hard against a stoutly defended door. When the door at last gave way, I was confronted by a room filled with dropped wrapping paper, disordered ribbons, shiny toys, screams of delight, little boys, the rat-tat-tat of a machine-gun, and the smells of a new chemistry set already in use.



"We told him he could stay out there and stand guard," said one of the bigger boys, amazed that anyone should not find joy in such an assignment.

"Let him in right this minute," said I, "and no more foolishness." Then I hastily retreated. Partly because I had just been hit in the face by a paper wad released from a slingshot. But mainly because I realized that my tones had been scarcely those which, as a host, I employed for adult guests.

A few minutes later his nurse appeared at the livingroom door. Already she had a tattered look. "Please come," she said, "they are shooting at people in the street."

I dashed back to find the window in his room open, and three of the little boys leaning out of it, peppering passers-by with their slingshots.

Once again, I'm afraid, my voice got out of control. "Put them down this instant," I ordered. To my astonishment I saw that even those who were not leaning out of the window had upraised slingshots in their hands.

"The next person who takes a slingshot out of his pocket will be sent home at once without lunch," I thundered charmingly. The boys eyed me angrily but uncowed. "Without ice cream!," I added. Two slingshots came down. "And he won't go to the Rodeo at all!" Every slingshot slunk into a protecting pocket.

"Where's Richard?" I asked, trying to remind them that I could be a considerate host.

"He's not here," the little boy muttered.

This time, when I left the room, a chorus of voices followed me. "I tell you what, let's gang up on Richard." —"Say, that's neat."—"When he comes, let's all get guns and hide in the front hall and attack him."

At that moment the doorbell rang. And Richard appeared with his mother. There was a brief armistice for company manners. During it I could have sworn I saw small figures at the far end of the hall creeping behind corners into imaginary pillboxes. They proved to be wily strategists, these juvenile commandos. They waited. A deceptive quiet settled on the apartment until Richard's mother left, and Richard started back with my sons, supposedly to the older boy's bedroom. H-hour struck halfway down the hall. An H-hour as much Comanche as it was Krupp.

"Stop it," I cried, "that's no way to treat Richard." But Richard didn't seem to mind at all. As an invading force, he was letting out a bombardment calculated to neutralize all shore defenses.

"I wonder when lunch will be ready," my wife asked. It was the tenth time

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she had asked this same question during the past quarter-hour.

"I was just about to ask you again," said I.

Finally, however, lunch was ready. After the inevitable last-minute trips to the bathroom, they trooped into the diningroom.

No party our friends had ever come to proved as noisily conversational as this one. Few bachelor dinners have ever so shaken the chandeliers.

My wife and I appeared only at moments of climax, which meant that we came in fairly often. Sudden summits of sound gave us our entrance cues. These came whenever favors were being hurled across the table, paper hats were being exchanged without consent, or when two guests were delightedly spitting in each other's faces. In comparison, the pop of snappers seemed to us as gentle as a lullaby. Although there was a good deal of simultaneous soliloquizing, there was little small talk. The conversation, when distinguishable from a barrage, consisted chiefly of fragrant descriptions of rival schools or discussions of figures in the comics utterly unknown to us. It ranged from sudden booms followed by "Say, listen to that atomic bomb" to boastful inquiries as to how many times this or that boy had been to the Rodeo.

At last, after a good deal of coaxing and commanding, the main course was finished, and the ice cream served. Then came the great moment, the moment blissful and friendly, when the lighted cake flickered at the pantry door as the signal for cease firing and the singing of "Happy Birthday." When the wish was made, the candles blown out, and the cake sliced, one little boy screamed, "No cake for me. I hate it."

By then, the Wild West was calling. It was time to get going, which meant going to the bathroom once again on a community plan.

It's appalling how children can make scoutmasters of us all. My wife and I suddenly heard ourselves clapping our hands peremptorily and saying, without so much as a blush, "Now we will divide into teams. You're on my team, Harold. You're on my team, David."

When this sheep and goat separation was finally effected, and the right coats, caps, and gloves had been claimed by and put on the right boys, our two groups started for the elevator.

Just when its doors opened, one boy shoved another in play. He picked the wrong one. Every group of kids seems to include one who has taken boxing lessons. He functions like a tank among archers. The pushed boy had not put on his gloves in vain. He felt he had been exposed to a sneak attack. He

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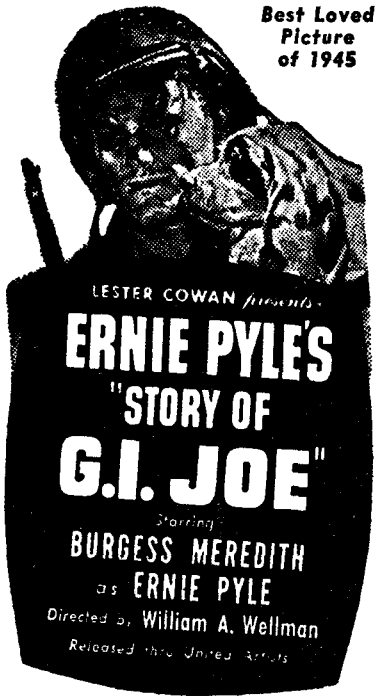
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retaliated in kind, waging war without declaring it in the best Japanese tradition. His right arm swung out, administering near the left eye of his friend a sock of which Cashel Byron would have been proud. The howls which followed were natural and instantaneous. So was the confusion. I found myself in the midst of the ring, a referee taking sides. I refused to admit the pugilist into my taxi. This meant another regrouping, and another slight delay.

When the two taxis were loaded, they proved noisier than calliopes. I remember only two things about the ride down. One was vigorously applying my handkerchief to the running eye of the bruised boy. The other was the moment when the noise in the cab became so great that the driver stopped the car to say, "Listen, you kids, either shut up or get out!"

Upon reaching the Garden, our car emptied like the Trojan horse. The Rodeo, when seen alone, is wearing enough. When seen in the company of eight little boys, it is downright exhausting. You not only watch the bucking broncos; you are surrounded by them.

The performance in the ring that afternoon is blurred in my mind. I didn't get to see much of it. I spent most of my time in the men's room. I functioned more as a shepherd than as a spectator.

I soon reached the conclusion that Aristotle must have had a rodeo rather than a tragedy in mind, when he spoke of the purgation of emotions through pity and fear. At least seven times during the afternoon I climbed over the people either behind me or around me, to lead little boys on private missions. Once I had all eight of them with me, including the four-year-old. By this time the others were completely at home on the range. He, however, was paying his first visit. Although there are pleasanter places than the men's room at the Garden, he thought it charming. No toreador could have been happier. With a look of excitement on his face he took a deep inhale, and said, so that everyone could hear him, "Oh, Daddy, smell the bulls!"

Even when not convoying the young, I could not give my full attention to the ring. For one thing, I never realized that people could ask so many questions, or such questions, in voices so loud. "What is a steer?" demanded one little fellow, while every adult head in the row in front of me turned around to await the answer.

Then, there were the vendors. Being astute psychologists, they sized up my predicament in a moment, and hovered around me like planes returning to a carrier. Popcorn, peanuts, spun candy, Coca-Cola, ice cream —these were simple enough; inexpensive, too. I didn't mind them. The real hazards were the men who came by screaming, "Want a cowboy belt?," "Want a Roy Rogers pistol?," "Want a Western whip?"

"*Will* you buy me one?" asked each little boy, in spite of the fact that the prices ranged from fifty cents to a dollar and a half.

"No!" I would say firmly. "No!"

"Oh, Daddy!!" my nine-year-old would snarl, not only indignant but ashamed. And six other sneering faces would pivot towards me. From them I learned something I had never before suspected. A Bronx cheer can be silent.

Just before the time came to leave, I was cowardly enough to surrender. I began to wonder what these boys would say to their fathers about my son's father. Accordingly, I bought each boy at fifty cents apiece chameleons or turtles that I knew could be purchased for ten cents three blocks away.

The leaving was not without its difficulties. My wife and I desired to get out before the crowd. Our guests desired to stay until after the crowd had left. We won, however, although not without a struggle.

Then, once again, we divided into teams. Once again with our teams we crawled into separate taxis. Our last job was to deposit each boy at his respective doorstep.

When we got home, and our boy had had his supper, he said, his eyes still glistening, "Wasn't it a wonderful birthday!" Then he went to bed. So did we. At once.

JOHN MASON BROWN.

Half a Rhyme

By Hassoldt Davis

THERE was a time, when we were small,
and war was far and far away,
and all the world was half a rhyme
for heaven.

There was a time, but long ago,
when we, the little boys,
of five and six and seven,
(including me), dreamed urgently
of how to have no peace at all.

Life was long, and fun was grim
and our small hearts were earnest,
and we who knew the elfin fun
of making faces at the sun,
of waging battles never won,
and waging dreams, but lunar dreams,
in thousands (or in dozens),
we plunged upon our smaller boys
and beat their little faces in,
and mocked their fathers' heaven.

There was a time, but long ago,
when mice and men were cousins.

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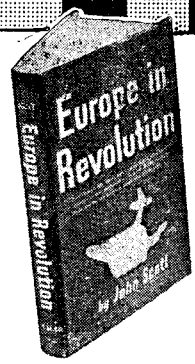
A new book

By **John Scott**

Author of **BEHIND THE URALS**



Europe, under Soviet rule in the East, dominated by England and the United States in the West, stands on the edge of decision. Europe, her economic system in ruins, her political frameworks shattered, and her peoples stunned by war, must rebuild. Will she be Russian or democratic: is our frontier on the Elbe now or are we in truth one world?

It is easier to fight against a common foe than to understand an ally. Hate and revenge are emotions easily aroused in the fury of war; difficult to replace when peace comes, they are often warped into suspicion and distrust of the people on our side.

Understanding a nation whose racial roots, history, economy, political theory, language, and psychology are foreign to ours comes hard. Yet understanding must come if we are to avoid future failures in diplomacy.

America's part is large, and it is important that Americans understand Europe and Russia and what they want to have happen there. Philadelphia-born John Scott has spent most of his adult life in Russia. Bred in the American tradition, but well-schooled in Soviet ideology, born of American parents but married to a Russian girl, he is amply qualified to present to Americans honestly and logically the European dilemma.

Europe in Revolution

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Stars in My Heart

By Genevieve Ellis

YOU will not mourn me when I go
Who never knew I came to be.
That day the neighbors living near
Will lay remembrance on my bier.
But that my world has died with me
Your worlds will never know.

Beyond a hemlock and a hedge
Rise chimney smoke and chapel spires
Until the streets go winding down
To winter fields and festooned wires.
Here are the boundaries of town.
Here are the tombs: the temple's edge
Where dwelling ends and dust retires.

I greet you, friends, addressing fame
By multiple and varied name;
Invoking you across the valleys,
Mountains, rivers, urban alleys,
Windy plains, and twilight timber.
Unaware, you speak with me.
Ten thousand thicknesses of wall
Transmit your voice's rise and fall.
The splendor of your glance assumes
The candle gleam of unseen rooms.
In eager hospitality
I fan to life one last, frail ember.

When I am withered, then for you
The dry, enduring taste of rue!
My love is every laurel blade
You ever wore, and all your flowers.
Every shivering cascade
Of white confetti flung from towers.
I am shelter from the rains
When none but Neptune entertains.
Against my shabby velvet night
Your lustre sharpens into light.
I am the foil of royalty.
And when your grace is growing brittle,
When your star-dust spills a little,
You are face to face with me.

How-do-you-do?
Tonight I send my card to you.
I am the momentary pause
Between oblivion and applause;
Laconic answer to your giving.
We hold perpetual rendezvous
Inside the hour-glass of our living,
Your sands to mine, my own replying
Denial of our mutual dying.
We share an epic destiny,
A barren doom. And blest or curst,
Your stars must tremble last and first
Within the chalice of my palms.
Accept my garlands, toss me alms;
But friends, if you must bury me,
Bury me with qualms!

I will to live. . . . And I shall even
Gamble on my lucky seven,
Here before the curtain rises,
Here before the chords of heaven.
You may not guess the face of guile,
The smile of impropriety;
I dress in manifold disguises.
I am the mother on the aisle,
The student on the balcony,
The florid impresario,
The dusty prompter in the wing,
The bearded man in second row.
The lights are low. . . . I rise to sing.

I sing that leafless boughs may cherish
Soughing bars before I perish.
And you, my friends who hurry by,
Forget the singer, lose the tune,
And whistle bravely to the moon;
But you may never utterly
Evade the living ghost of me!
If you behold my body breathless
Call it Death, but I am deathless.
If you should see my lashes lie
Along the pallor of my cheek,
Kindly neighbor, rise and speak:
Say that this was never I!

What masque is this? A woman died
And left, as she had prophesied,
A passive image in her place,
A figure with a sleeping face.
The marble fingers, marble forehead,
Eye-lids sealing time and tears,
The bosom resting of its fears
And of its old forlorn pretending
Are the elements she borrowed
From the womb of life and lending;
Are the weapons of her will,
And coinage of her reckless spending.
Her yesterdays lie locked and still
In tranquil dreams beside a quill,
A fantasia to her friends,
And seven cooling candle ends.
Who is your hostess, phantom mourners
Hovering in shadowed corners,
Vanishing upon the stairs?
Speak! Identify the dead
Oblivious of vestal prayers
To highest heaven long rehearsed,
Upon the hearth she warmly nursed,
Before the flame she fed!
No shadow stirs. No breath exhales
Reply against the faceless veils.

Beyond the hedges, coldly blowing,
Cordial neighbors on the square
Have sent her fragrance, little knowing
She had captured and compressed
The funerals of friend and guest
And snared their essence in her hair.
Callers, linger ere your going
Past the portals thinly snowing,
Feather shod and velvet gloved;
Pause and say what soul was she
Who beat against this effigy
And tore and left it prostrate there?
Of Eve, what errant mermaid daughter
Writing clearly under water,
Under rhythmic ripples singing
Some reverberating air
Until the waves were wild and winging?
So one reads:
This person, dying in December,
Was such a daughter, sister, member,
Was such a mother, well beloved,
Was such a wife.
This is the number of her years.
(The butcher heeds.
The baker hears.)
She wrote these timid verses all her life.

Consolement

LINES TO A CHEWINK, SINGING

By Percy MacKaye

HIDDEN being, on your bough
Of greenery, Chewink,
Whose joyous, glinty chirpings bless
The shadows of your secret covert, how
Can you so quick bethink
Summer's bereaved remembering
Of budding Spring,
To sing
With such angelicly sweet cheeriness?

We, with less wisdom than a bird's,
We mortals, fret,
Or stoicly forego, when we forget
The glowing beauty that engirds
Our grief with God's own healing radiance,
And brood askance
Upon our dark mischance
Of deprivation.—Not a wink
Of such purblind unwittingness
Is yours, little Chewink,
In your blithe carol's quick caress,
From which we songless ones, who yearn
For our departed dearest, learn
Remembrance of love's lost itself is their return.

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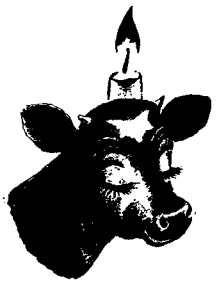

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Novel of Chinese Family Life

THE SMALL GENERAL. By Robert Standish. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1945. 233 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by EMILY HAHN

ROBERT STANDISH has published earlier novels about Japan and he now tries his hand in a similar style on China. It is probably as good a novel as any of the rank and file which have appeared in the past two or three years in reply to the American appetite for Chinese subjects; or perhaps these books were stirred by the American appetite and it's a matter of the chicken before the egg.

Mr. Standish gives a convincing and attractive picture of the Chinese people who live in the country, in this case on Ta Hu, the lake between Soochow and Hangchow which has played an important part in the Chinese-Japanese war of the past eight years. Not that this novel is about the war. It is not at all a war book; it is a picture of the fortunes of one family whose business and domestic affairs are woven into the development of China, so that the horizon of the plot is much widened. The fortunes of the Sung family is built upon silk. Silkworms live on mulberry leaves. The Sungs have a family secret by which they get far more yield of cocoons than does anybody else in the district.

It is always refreshing to read a straight novel, a book in which the writer has not been infected by the widely prevalent disease of interpreting modern Chinese politics. It is salutary for us to be reminded now and then that the Chinese are after all just people like ourselves, interested in their own family affairs, and no more conscious of the political developments and upheavals of their government than is the average American.

This reviewer has only one complaint to make against Robert Standish. Like many other people he has fallen victim to the magic of the Chinese language, to such an extent that his translation is incomplete and gives a stilted, false flavor to the speech of his people. For example:

> "But we now have Democracy!" protested the Small General. "Surely that is important?"
>
> "Where is this Democracy you prate about?" asked Sung irritably. "Show me some! What does it look like?"
>
> "Democracy is an idea, my father," said the Small General, trying to conceal his impatience.

Now it's a small thing, but it irritates me when I read what is alleged to be the plain speech of plain people and a son addresses his father as "my father," instead of "Dad" or just plain "Father." What is a translation if it's not the nearest possible approximation to the feeling of the original speech? We are asked to believe that this is a farmer's son talking to his father. He is talking in Chinese, but it has been put into English for our convenience. All right. One would suppose that if he were speaking English he would speak just as any English or American farmer's son would speak to his father. Goodness knows, Mr. Standish isn't alone in committing this sin, but to my mind it is exactly like those ridiculous movies in which the denizens of Rio talk to each other supposedly in Portuguese, employing heavy Latin accents in very faulty English.

And another thing, Mr. Standish, why on earth must you say "things Chinese," instead of "Chinese things"? I have not observed it, but it's just possible that you have even waved the other red flag in my face and used the phrase "time immemorial." Someday I shall write a Chinese novel guaranteed to put a stop to that nonsense. The title is going to be "Ai-yah; Or, Things Chinese From Time Immemorial." Novels Chinese into the future far cannot carry on like this, or one reviewer at least will crazy stark staring go.

Book-Ban

By Melville Cane

(Bay State high court deems "Strange Fruit" obscure, in opinion by Justice Stanley E. Qua. Daily paper.)

IN the Land of Cod and Bean
If they think your book's obscene,
Start to worry,
For a Judge, whose name is Qua,
Will espy you from afar
For his Quarry.

Should you fail to meet the test
He will Quash you in his Quest;—
Though you Quarrel
With his Queasy point of view
He will Quote a law that's blue,
Therefore moral.

This you may and that you mayn't
Say,—the rule is Queer and Quaint,
Slightly Quondam,
A reminder of an age
When they clapped you in a cage
Just for *one* "damn."

In the Land of Cod and Bean
Watch the word and Ward it clean,
Or you'll rue it.
Better yet, avoid the state
And be spared the bitter fate
Of "Strange Fru-it."

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In the Sixth Century

THE UNSPEAKABLES. A Tale of Lombardy. By Laverne Gay. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1945. 394 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by GRACE FRANK

ACCORDING to many medievalists the sixth century A.D. was one of the most important and turbulent eras in our history. Certainly the works of Pope Gregory the Great, Paul the Deacon, and Gregory of Tours suggest that this period was hot with passions and spattered with human blood. The Germanic barbarians quarreled endlessly with one another and at various times also opposed the Latins, the Byzantine Emperor, the Exarch in Ravenna, and the Pope at Rome. Christian rulers called upon tribes but recently baptized to wage war against their heathen kin; Catholics, Arians, and pagans fought for lands as well as faith. And the luxury of the rich flagrantly mocked the misery of the dispossessed.

Mrs. Gay's story revolves around the Lombards, "the unspeakables" in

Pope Gregory's phrase, and especially around a Catholic princess, Theodelinda of Bavaria, who married in turn two heretical Lombard noblemen. The author manages to bring into her tale innumerable major and minor figures of the epoch and every event of consequence vouched for by our authorities. Her knowledge of the history and archeology of the period is obviously extensive and her imagination creative, but she has failed to fit her characters into their colorful background and bring them to life. Despite her wide and sure acquaintance with her material, perhaps indeed because of it, her novel is so clotted with decorative detail, with persons and incidents of historical rather than fictional import, that its narrative seems as rigid as a Byzantine mosaic, while at the same time it lacks the selectivity and stylization that make the best specimens of Byzantine art richly vibrant and meaningful. The dust which, according to Professor Thompson, has been too long with Theodelinda is vigorously stirred by this book; in the clouds it raises, however, the Lombard queen and her companions remain almost as insubstantial as before.

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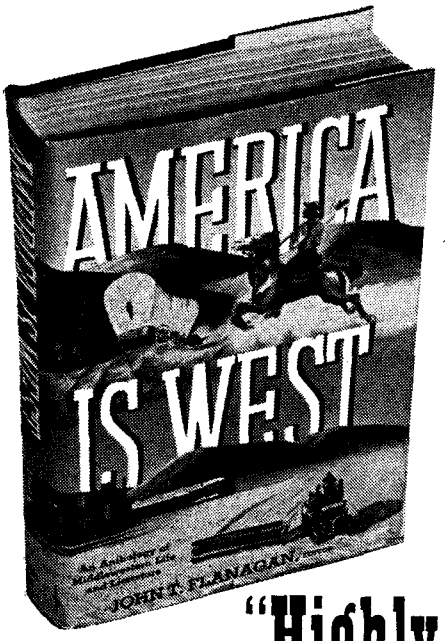

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America Is West

AN ANTHOLOGY OF MIDDLEWESTERN LIFE AND LITERATURE

Edited by JOHN T. FLANAGAN

At all bookstores, $3.75
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA PRESS
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THE UNIVERSITY OF Minnesota PRESS

Waifs of Calamity

AND THE FIELD IS THE WORLD. By Dola de Jong. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1945. 215 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by SARA HENDERSON HAY

OUT of the endless line of refugees, plodding along the roads of Europe, Aart and Lies, themselves fleeing from Holland in a crazy red trailer, picked up six abandoned children. They were an oddly assorted group—Hans, the sixteen-year-old German, son of parents working in the Underground who had sent him to France for what they hoped was safe keeping; Rainer, fifteen-year-old German Jew; adolescent Maria, and eight-year-old Luba, Polish sisters; Berthe, a little Belgian girl, and French Pierre, aged five. In the trailer also was little Dolf, Lies's own child, born somewhere along the way to the barren farm on the outskirts of Tangiers, Morocco, where the family had finally settled and tried to wrest a living from the parched earth.

This is no Pied Piper story, full of light charm and with a happy ending—it is a grim and bitterly realistic picture of what war does to children beyond the maiming of their bodies. Miss de Jong's children adapt themselves with a primitive instinct for self-preservation to the circumstances in which they find themselves. Their memories of a world in which they had parents and comfort and clean sheets and enough to eat fade and blur; their world is the bitter, terrifying, breaking-up world of 1941, and the corrugated iron shack in which they all live, and the field where all day long they work helping Aart and Lies carry water to try to coax a crop from land which would never produce. Impractical, dreamer Aart hoped to make a living for them, but it was soon obvious even to the children that the land would not bear. They began to shift for themselves.

When Aart was arrested for resisting an Arab officer, Hans took over as head of the little group, and on Aart's long delayed release managed to get them all passage to Lisbon, though he himself fell into the hands of the Gestapo who had been looking for him as hostage for his parents.

These are the bare bones of the plot; there is no solution. There will be nothing for Lies and Aart and the children when they do reach Lisbon. This is a tragic book, written with deep insight and unsparing realism. It is a remarkable picture of childhood, unsentimental and stark. These children remind the reader of the children of "The Innocent Voyage"—they are brave and cruel and innocent and uninhibited and intensely practical. They adjust themselves with that incredible adaptability of children, an acceptance of circumstances with a blind instinct for self-preservation which lets them ride out experiences which would shatter an adult.

But the deeper significance of the book is not that these children somehow preserved themselves, but that they are the generation of this war in Europe, the children who will inherit and have to reap the devastated field of the world. It is a haunting and disturbing book, beautifully written and admirably translated by Mr. A. v. A. Van Duym, Miss de Jong's compatriot.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 123

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer to No. 123 *will be found in the next issue.*

W AGKKNJTBV TC YTXM W CSTF; MOMDV GJM GNRSB BG ZM FDMFWDME BG BWXM BSM SMYK.

—WJ MJMKV GH BSM FMGFYM.

—SMJDTX TZCMJ.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 122

NOISE IS THE MOST IMPERTINENT OF ALL FORMS OF INTERRUPTION. IT IS NOT ONLY AN INTERRUPTION, BUT ALSO A DISRUPTION OF THOUGHT.
—STUDIES IN PESSIMISM.
—ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER.

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Captive of Life

JUDD RANKIN'S DAUGHTER. By Susan Glaspell. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1945. 254 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by THOMAS SUGRUE

"I DON'T know why God put this upon me," Judd Rankin said, "bringing this idiot into the world." He was describing his daughter Frances, now in her forties, with a son just returned from the war bearing the terrifying phrase "battle fatigue" attached to his record. Frances had come back to Iowa to find out from her father some solution, some wisdom, some explanation which would clear away the barrier that surrounded young Judson and kept everyone away from him, even his dog. Precisely Frances wanted to know what was going on in the world and what would come of it. Her father said he didn't know, but he would lay a bet on the outcome.

"I think a rather sad victory will be won," he said. "I think life will win and I think life's rather sad."

That didn't help Frances. She was not yet old enough to perceive, and not wise enough to suspect, that the entire stream of life, on earth and throughout the cosmos, is an experiment, a testing by fire and faith and chemicals, with the object never known to the ingredients and the result never quite achieved by their mixture. Her husband Len, a writer and critic, half-guessed it, and was damned roundly by almost everyone for believing in ideals which only evolution could accomplish. Doggedly he slogged along, stopping to kick at Fascism, anti-Semitism, and intolerance wherever he met them; but his kicks didn't seem to have much effect.

It was all right with Frances until young Judson cracked up. She believed as her husband believed, but in a simple, feminine way she regarded the world as a play which might be entitled "The Confusion of Everyone Present." Then the confusion, the irritation, the warring of vast national egos, concentrated on someone she loved, and like many before her she suddenly wanted to do something about all the things that were wrong. She didn't, of course; it all worked out as it normally does in life.

Susan Glaspell writes a story with delicacy and skill, blending the thoughts, ideas, emotions, and personalities of characters so that they interwine, yet stand out for themselves, like the pieces in a New England rag carpet. She also gives an intimation, but no more, of the creeping tide of time, the catalyst, which alone brings surcease from the abra-

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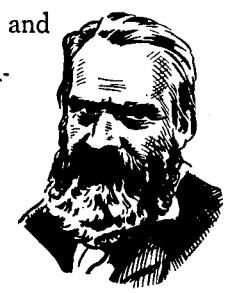

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sions of the life experiment, replacing one set of reactions with another. Thus Judd Rankin, who worked all his life to bring personality and culture to his native state—employing his remarkable cousin, Adah, for the good earth of his effort—ends by achieving his ambition, only to see it become, suddenly, the sin of isolationism. It is his daughter, returning from the East, who gives to him the feminine role once occupied by Adah, and prompts him into a final thrust of inspiration and energy which lifts him and his Iowa into the next stratum of human effort, where the things which now are new and shining virtues will wax and finally wane, slipping into desuetude and sin.

There is very much of the average American in this book, and for that reason it would be a good idea for him to read it. The wild songs of the new prophets are all very well, but the normal ear can catch but a few notes of them. Here is a melody that can be heard entire. It's a little fuzzy and, as Judd Rankin said of life, rather sad, but until we attune ourselves more successfully to the music of the spheres it is what we will be hearing all around us.

Where America Is More Like America

AMERICA IS WEST: An Anthology of Middlewestern Life and Literature. Edited by John T. Flanagan. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press. 1945. 677 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

OF the making of anthologies there is no end, and few of these collections rise into eminence. Occasionally, however, one comes along so fresh, rich, and excellent that it calls for notice and for praise. "America Is West" is one of the best anthologies of the decade, and one of the most absorbing collections of material about the United States.

Everybody knows the usual "regional" anthology. The laboring editor, feeling he must represent every acre of the region, scratches gravel to find a local poem, a forgotten tale, an historical bit that will prove the existence of culture at Salem Corners as well as in the big city. He has also to prove that the culture is self-sufficient; hence he hurls defiance at New York, which pays no attention to his thunderbolts. He announces a program of literary creativeness for his state that is to make all things new, and declares that the great primitive area he represents has come to full and fragrant flower. After that, nothing particularly happens.

"America Is West" is not of this order of lack of magnitude. Mr. Flanagan has generously defined "West" as embracing Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas, and the two Dakotas. He points out that four centuries have elapsed since Hennepin's "Description de la Louisiane," the first volume that had much to do with the Middle West; and if this seems too remote, he comes down to Daniel Drake, Timothy Flint, and James Hall, the literary ancestors of Sinclair Lewis and Ruth Suckow.

Mr. Flanagan has a good eye and a good ear, and no interest whatsoever in conventional bellelettristic judgments. At least half of his material is seldom or never discussed in courses on (or in) American literature; and I suspect that more than fifty per cent of his writers will be new to the present generation of vanguard critics, either because the critics do not know them at all or have heard about them and decided they were not worth looking into. Nevertheless, here is stimulating and excellent writing.

The earlier literature from or about the Middlewest seems to have been primarily literature of action and description. The material here gathered under the headings of "The Indians," "Explorer and Traveler," "The Frontier," "The Woods," and "The River" illustrates this truth; and indeed a large part of that gathered under the rubrics of "The Farm," "The Small Town," and "The City" is also of this order. It is writing reminding you that if America was promises, it was also activity, not contemplation.

Perhaps, indeed, contemplation and analysis have been too much ignored, either by Middlewesterners or by Mr. Flanagan or by both. The weakest part of the collection seems to me, at least, to be the final one, "Interpretations," in which ten living or recent writers point out the cultural and social significance of the region.

There is a mild degree of bumptiousness in the volume. The preface is entitled "From the Heartland"; and there is a certain element of brag in the selections. This is, however, as much a part of the picture as the racy and admirable writing, and perhaps the chief difference among regions is not the presence of brag in one and the absence of it in another, but the varying modes of expression that this self-confidence receives.

"America Is West" is, then, a fresh, readable, and rich anthology. Anybody interested in either cultural or literary history will find huge chunks of it useful to his purpose; and the general reader will discover a vast amount of entertainment in its pages.

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Story of a G.I.

UNDERTOW. By Howard Maier. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1945. 273 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by CPL. MAURICE BASSECHES

I LIKE publishers. Some of my best friends are publishers. But that doesn't mean they don't have to be watched.

Especially on war novels. So far they have printed several by well-known authors that GI's feel ring phony. Moreover, they have put out books by writers in uniform that are equally false. One was "The Brick Foxhole."

Another is "Undertow." To its publishers it is "beautifully written, sensitive and authentic; it is also an honestly felt blast at the reaction, red tape and know-everything attitude of some of the brass hats in our Army. Above all it is a book the returning soldier will realize had to be written."

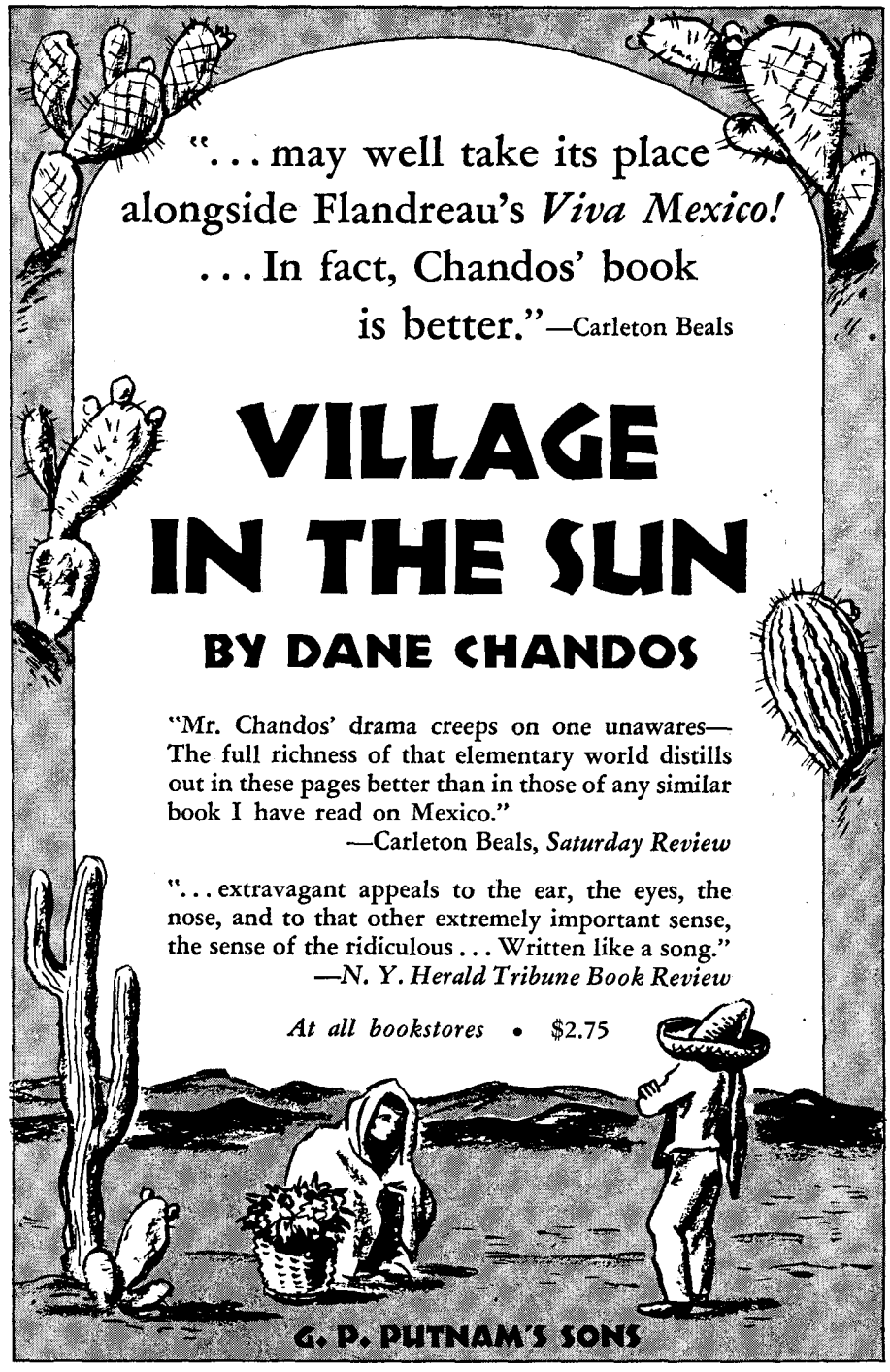
Some day a veteran may turn out such a book. After a brief thirteen months in service, however, Mr. Maier hasn't done so. What he has written in "Undertow" is, I suspect, a more timely GI introduction to a psychological tale he had among his manuscripts as a short story and radio writer.

Certainly Mr. Maier is weakest in the opening Army section of this story of Russell Davis. Not only is the writing thinner and clumsier than in the later civilian flashback but it repeatedly explodes his publishers' claim of authenticity.

Just one small example: the author has Davis's MP outfit bustle off *full strength* to do town patrol while their prisoners watch through the stockade fence. You may be sure that they didn't stay there long with nobody left to guard them!

More important is the error in the advertised statement that "Undertow" is the account of a *normal* man who cracks up in uniform. Reading but a few pages makes it clear that Russ Davis is a very touchy and unstable young man.

As the author reveals in a long flashback, thirty-two-year-old Davis had an overly possessive mother and a brother who "went crazy" and hanged himself. Perhaps a more searching induction examination would have barred Russ from military service. In uniform, though, he might make a good study of the much-publicized "psychoneurotic." Yet while Mr. Maier has a talent for often keen and high-tension prose, from the overall hodge-podge of "Undertow" I doubt whether he is the psychological novelist to do the job.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THE LONDON TIMES

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Robbing Pain of Its Terror

MAN AGAINST PAIN; The Epic of Anesthesia. By Howard Riley Raper. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1945. 315 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by ALBERT Q. MAISEL

THIS is IT: the most exciting book about medicine—for the non-medical reader—since Paul de Kruif hit the jackpot twenty years ago.

It is the sort of book from which one instinctively shies away — (who wouldn't pause before buying anything labeled an "Epic"; who wouldn't hesitate to purchase the literary product of a dentist?)—yet anyone above the age of ten who gets beyond Dr. Raper's first sentence will, despite the volume's topic, spend a sleepless night under the bedlamp. For here is the story of the bitterest of controversies told with the skill of an Eric Ambler; a detective mystery come to life to shame all our artisans of detective fiction.

Dr. Raper writes like a dream—one cannot come away from his pages without borrowing the terminology of anesthesia—he writes with humor and love for his subject, with humility, and with rare skill as a historian. As one who has suffered in dental chairs more from the dentist's vaporings on life, literature, and the stock market than from his drills and picks—and who hasn't?—I am looking forward to the day when I can sit down in Dr. Raper's. If he can talk as he can write, he'll need no tools to keep me gagged.

With such skill and talent, it becomes of little moment that most of us have no special interest in anesthesia. We'll have it . . . as soon as we pass page two.

About one-half of "Man Against Pain" is concerned with the discovery of anesthesia, the event which—barely a century ago — revolutionized all medicine, made possible thousands of now commonplace developments in surgery, and opened up a hundred new avenues for medical investigation. Like so many of the great inventions, anesthesia waited for nearly half a century to be born. The means were available as early as 1800, when Humphrey Davy explored the intoxicating effects of nitrous oxide. The need has been present since the beginning of time. Yet it was not until the 1840's that problem and solution were finally linked. And then they were discovered—or developed or appreciated or stolen; you'll have to read Dr. Raper to find out who did which—by four men simultaneously.

The discovery was recognized throughout the world as a momentous turning point in human history. But it touched off a controversy so bitter and so enduring that it blighted the lives of all four antagonists. Long, the Georgia country doctor who used ether for anesthesia first, but didn't know he was doing it, lived out his days futilely explaining his lack of vision. Wells, the Hartford dentist who, in Raper's estimation of the evidence, came closest to the rightful claim to invention, got only paltry recognition and committed suicide while administering ether to himself. Morton who wanted money for his share and fought his claim on street corners, in lecture halls, in countless papers, and even through Congress, died poor. Jackson, the chemist connected with both Morton and Wells, ended in an insane asylum.

With rare consideration for his readers, Dr. Raper tells his story of this controversy in a hundred fascinating pages. Then, for those whose interest or curiosity prompts further delving into the countless details of claim and counter-claim—and these will number far more than the modest doctor suspects—he provides a bonus in the form of a critical bibliography at the end of the book, in which the documents of the case and the commentaries of others are analyzed and, often, refuted.

But "Man Against Pain" does not begin nor does it end with the controversy of discovery, fascinating though that epic—oh, oh—battle proves to be. A hundred other stories marshal the facts that have fascinated Dr. Raper—and will fascinate his readers—into a history of everything anesthetic, from the seriously proposed use of a club to knock the patient out to the streamlined, specialized anesthesias of today which permit the skilled anesthetist to play his instruments with all the range of an organ.

The tone changes in this part of the book; the precision of the historian is no longer needed and Dr. Raper brings to his subject an almost poetic

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appreciation of the delicacy of his art, of the emotional and human attachments inseparable from anything that, Godlike, robs pain of its terror. He speaks of ethylene gas as "a kind of extra dry Martini, a drink to inhale instead of swallow." He talks of cyclopropane as "the gas with the voluptuous name."

In their sum, his stories present his fellow anesthetists as a curious blend of scientists and showmen. He tells, for instance, of Guedel and Waters who, to prove the value of their carbon-dioxide-absorption technique, startled the staid American Medical Association Congress—which barely tolerates anesthetists as a sort of subhuman, bastard group—with an exhibit of a dog, submerged upside down in a fishbowl for four hours. The animal, completely anesthetized, emerged at last to shake himself and walk off, none the worse for his immersion.

Most fascinating of all, though not without close competition throughout the book, is the chapter on the dreams which accompany anesthesia; the feeling of seeing into the heart of things and divining the great secrets of the universe. Most of us are content to remain with just the memory of having communed with the infinite, somewhat annoyed at not being able to remember the exact nature of the revelation that was so crystal clear in our induced sleep. But Captain H. R. Robinson—naturally one of Raper's heroes—decided to wake up, once, and write it down. Robinson used opium, which may account for what happened. At any rate, the next morning when he looked at his pad, there was the great secret scrawled in letters half a foot high; "The banana is great . . . but the skin is greater." Raper resigns the analysis to the Freudians.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
APPOINTMENT IN MANILA *Elinor Chamberlain* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Jewelled kris slays elderly Spaniard in Manila just before Pearl Harbor. Hush-hush agent Henderson does acceptable sleuthing.	Manila in pre-War days and during Japanese invasion scene of thrilling and mystifying series of crimes—with explosive finish.	Grade-A
THE YELLOW ROOM *Mary Roberts Rinehart* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.50)	Corpse in linen-closet of Maine mansion is first of killings that bedevil Carol Spencer and puzzle the authorities—pro and amateur.	Eerie and romantic mixture—with infusion of humor and plenty of excitement—a mystery novel rather than a 'tec story.	Rewarding
V AS IN VICTIM *Lawrence Treat* (Duell, Sloan & Pearce: $2.50)	Hit-and-run accident begins murderful trail followed, in their respective fashions, by N. Y. sleuths Taylor and Freeman.	Scientific detecting versus dogged persistence gives both 'tecs chance to do their stuff. Action, some torrid spots, and surprise finish.	Good—in the semi-tough bracket
THE SILVER TOMBSTONE *Frank Gruber* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.)	Johnny Fletcher and Sam Cragg again, as busted and resourceful as ever, in violent yarn of Arizona slayings.	Old tricks of Sam and Johnny pleasantly rehashed—with many new ones. Devious dealings over "lost" mine provides most of incessant action.	Grade-A Gruber
THE SCARLET BUTTON *Anthony Gilbert* (Smith & Durrell: $2.)	Violent deaths of English blackmailer and pretty barmaid give lawyer-sleuth Crook nice problem.	Best of the Crook tales to date. Well-plotted, baffling, suspenseful, and reasonably fast-going.	Good
DEATH OF A SWAGMAN *Arthur W. Upfield* (Crime Club: $2.)	Two murders near small Australian town bring Insp. Napoleon Bonaparte—"Bony" to you—on scene, and some extraordinary deducing follows.	Aboriginal sleuth, who begins this yarn in clink, clears up almost too cleverly contrived series of deaths. Background is exotic, as always.	Colorful

Rediscovered!

The Dr. Johnson of the 'nineties

William Ernest Henley

by JEROME HAMILTON BUCKLEY

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Windows into the Jewish World

A PARTISAN GUIDE TO THE JEWISH PROBLEM. By Milton Steinberg. Indianapolis: The Bobbs Merrill Co. 1945. 308 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

THIS book contains everything that one needs or may desire to know about "the Jewish problem," which, from my point of view, is more accurately described as the Gentile or Christian problem. The material is extraordinary in range and depth, and is ably organized and most effectively presented. There is eloquence in this work, and understanding and compassion—and, despite the title, no partisanship at all, save as Rabbi Steinberg is a partisan of decency, justice, and human brotherhood. Both for popular reading and scholarly inquiry, I would place this book first among all the books I chance to know on the fell question of anti-Semitism.

What I particularly like is the forthright way in which the author handles his fellow Jews and their relation to the whole problem. He has no sympathy with cowardice, or submission, or even mere patience and long-suffering. He is fiercely scornful of evasion and every form of escapism. Assimilation in his eyes is as unworthy as it is futile. Had not the German Jews gone farther in the direction of adjustment than any other Jews, and have they not been all but annihilated by the Nazis? No, Rabbi Steinberg would have the Jews stand straight and tall in the full dignity of their manhood. He would have them concede nothing and claim everything of their human rights. Here in this country they exist not by sufferance or favor but by full legal and moral sanction. In Palestine they are building the homeland with the pledged support of Britain and the world. Let them be courageous, proud, stalwart in faith, hope, and resolute determination. To be true to themselves and to their own great and distinctive tradition is the Jews' contribution to the solution of the problem.

All this sounds belligerent—but Rabbi Steinberg is not really belligerent at all. On the contrary, he is sane and sober, persuasive rather than aggressive in his tone of argument, remarkably objective in his statement of conflicting viewpoints, but in the end unyielding in his presentation of the case for the Jew. This book is not an apology but a declaration of the rights of man—more particularly, in this instance, of Israel.

To the Gentile this book is especially valuable as opening windows into the Jewish world, and into the Jewish soul. Where anti-Semitism comes from, what the Jews think of it, what it does to them, and how they try to meet it, the economic world of the Jew and his problem of livelihood, the unfortunate divisions among the Jews, their representative types of character and forms of life, Palestine and its despairs and hopes—it's all here, the whole story, the complete picture. I find nothing lacking, except perhaps a discussion of contemporary Jewish leaders. It was something of a surprise to run through the index of this book, and find no mention of Wise, Silver, Goldstein, Goldman, or Judah Magnes, and only a chance quotation from Chaim Weizmann.

But "A Partisan Guide to the Jewish Problem" calls not for blame at any point, but for high praise and gratitude. There is no more pitiful and poignant, or more difficult, problem in the world today than anti-Semitism. It wrings the heart, and outrages the mind. In so far as there can be a sure guide through this labyrinth of torture, this book is it. Let the Gentile read one chapter, "A Warning to Gentiles," and the Jew one chapter, "An Exhortation to Jews," and together they will understand their debt to Rabbi Steinberg.

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Cass Timberlane

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the Phoenix Nest

SOMETIMES I feel like putting on my letter paper, instead of my address, simply "A Quandary," because that is what I live in. The quandary is: how to do right by all the people who write to me and send in things and at the same time earn the modest stipend I receive for filling this Nest with eggs, good or bad. Any columnist eventually becomes a vehicle for his contributors and it does not involve exactly arduous labor to put together a bunch of contributions, and so make a column. Yet I have a briefcase full of letters, poems, things people wish me to print or wish me to talk about. If but few of them get printed you will just have to refer it to The Quandary. If too many get printed, and I seem to do too little work of my own—same reference. Last week I was privileged to print what was really a long article, with some unpublished letters, the result of some correspondence with the sister of the late Vachel Lindsay. That article still seems to me to have well-warranted allowing it the whole column and even extended space; for it seems to me that Vachel was a prophet who never lived to see a number of things he fought for coming true, in the strange and partially unexpected way that things do come true in this world. I think the Atomic Bomb would utterly have outraged his soul. But I think he guessed that some such dire device was in the heart of man; for all evil is latent there as well as every good.

Some months ago I received a postcard from Henry Miller, the writer, who now lives at Big Sur, California, telling me that *Circle* is a live and kicking magazine and its editor, George Leite, a man of integrity and a human dynamo. I note in the correspondence columns of *The New Republic* Fall Book Number a letter from Bern Porter referring to the fact that he and George Leite organized *Circle* for the purpose of publishing great and unknown talent. Porter's address is 2303 Durant Avenue, Berkeley, California. Miller says that he knows of no editor who deserves more support than Leite, or who will give more support to young and unknown writers. "*Circle* knows no limits of any kind: it is capable of infinite expansion from an ever shifting center." I pass on Miller's comment for the information of young writers. I have never seen a copy of *Circle,* so I cannot comment upon it myself. But Miller adds, "There is no cult or art colony at Big Sur. There is no circle except *Circle.*"

I am glad Bennett Cerf, my distinguished confrère, published the comment he did upon Beatrice Kaufman. After reading the incredibly cheap and callous notice of her death in *Time: The Weekly News Magazine,* and trying to fathom the minds that could have produced it, Bennett's comment seemed doubly clear and clean. I never knew Mrs. Kaufman well, but I know that what Bennett says is true, about her love of life. her many friends, her sympathy for and help of others. A while ago I received from a distinguished American poet this tribute to another vivid and vital woman. I only met her a few times but nobody who ever met Mary Lawton could forget her.

MARY LAWTON

Laughter is gone again,
Winds are contrary:
The gusto of many men
Crowded in Mary.

How she would know their ways,
How she could see!
Those were the happy days.
She laughed at me,

I laughed at her as well,
We laughed together.
Heaven and earth and hell
Were a good weather.

WITTER BYNNER.

Anne B. G. Hart of Northampton, Mass., sends me the following tribute in an English weekly, to a great man:

ON A DEAD PRESIDENT

Here in the Feld of the Dead that looks to the sea,
The blue and smouldering Western seas in Spring,
The hedgerows white as for a bridal day
With blackthorn, stitchwort and wild strawberry,
I remember the great man who has gone from the earth.
Here in this remote far tongue of land
Whence our forefathers sailed for America
Grief comes to us out of the new world they found,

Made one with us in common suffering.
We mourn a warrior who has earned his rest,
Who tonight sleeps for ever the sleep of the just.
The familiar voice, resonant and strong,
That made him a friend at every fireside
Here in this little land, thousands of miles
Away from where he lived and worked and died,
The voice that brought courage out of despair,
Out of defeat gave assurance of victory,
Is stilled at last. He is gathered to his own,
A prince of his people, his place is with the great
Ones of the past: the cool and lofty spirit
Of the First President, founder of the State;
The warm and infinitely human soul
Of Lincoln, the depths of those prophetic eyes,
Those pools that mirrored all man's tragedy.
Tonight he lies with the Kings of thought and action,
Removed from all clamorous aspersion,
All questionings done and his account shut up.
His was the spirit to whom millions owe
Not only liberty, but life itself.
The heart that pulsed with human sympathy
For the defenseless and the weak, that chiefly heard
The cry of the most numerous and the most poor,
Is stopped for ever. Yet in this hour of grief
We celebrate with pride all that man's life
Can achieve, the spirit's victory over the body,
The crippled limbs, the indomitable will,
The gift of gaiety surmounting pain,
The lonely dedication to the end.
A star has fallen from the Western sky
That lit our lives and lent us hope to be:
Now all is still, save for the birds that cry
And in the night the sighing of the sea.

A. L. ROWSE.

Time and Tide: 28 April, 1945.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. Edmond Dantes, in "The Count of Monte Cristo," by Alexandre Dumas. 2. Samuel Pickwick, in "Pickwick Papers," by Charles Dickens. 3. "Peter Ibbetson," by George DuMaurier. 4. Ernest Pontifex, in "The Way of All Flesh," by Samuel Butler. 5. Dr. Manette, in "A Tale of Two Cities," by Charles Dickens. 6. Amber St. Clare, in "Forever Amber," by Kathleen Winsor. 7. "Moll Flanders," by Daniel Defoe. 8. Ortho Penhale, in "West Wind," by Crosbie Garsten. 9. Adolphe Culpepper Ferguson, in "Behold the Deeds," by H. C. Bunner. 10. James Dyke, in "The Valiant," by Holworthy Hall and Robert Middlemass.

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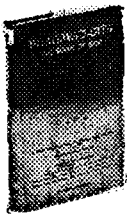

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Tales of the South

THE FOREST OF THE SOUTH. By Caroline Gordon. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1945. 245 *pp.* $2.50.

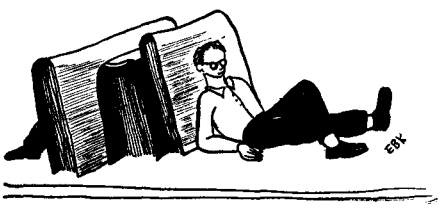
Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

THERE is a flowing vividness about grand folk and plain ones in these stories of Caroline Gordon which, even when they are trivial as stories and become mere anecdotes, lifts them into high quality by contrast with most American short stories now being written. I doubt, however, that Miss Gordon is at her best in the short story. She is undoubtedly in this book most effective in the short novel "The Captive." It is the strength of all her stories that they create people about whom we want to read more and their weakness that their exits are often not quite satisfying. The important thing is that here, as in her novels, she writes with clarity and beauty.

I have not read any short piece of writing in a long time which I enjoyed as much as the story from which the book takes its name. It is not a great short story. But it seemed to me almost perfect as a piece of writing about the dark beauty of the mood of grandeur and grace which disappeared long ago in the American South. I am not even sure this lacquered time ever existed. Beautiful as the old Natchez places were, Miss Gordon gives them a depth in grandness which seems not of this world or our past. But she has coupled a sort of mad majesty with such meticulous realism in describing the talk and action of Federal troops that the whole thing seems more tragically true than any past could have been.

There is great variety in the stories. There are other tales of the old South including a macabre anecdote which is vividly wrought though it is little more than a Southern jibe at Yankee slickness even with the dead. She is particularly skilful, I think, in the characters of women and boys.

Only the stories about Alex Maury, Miss Gordon's elderly modern Southern gentleman and sportsman, bored me. There I felt a thinness of character, not of story. Indeed, Mr. Maury, while mildly amusing, sometimes seemed to me to be an almost too familiar character on the printed pages about courtly but shrewd elderly men down in Dixie.



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PERSONALS

(*Continued from page* 41)

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The Crostics Club

By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

OF late we have heard from three men in the service testifying to the help they have received from DC's in trying circumstances. Arthur Knodel, Veterans' Hospital, Livermore, Cal., impatient of the few received through the *SRL,* made one of his own and sent it to me. In return I sent back a copy of "Invitation to DC's" for which he writes a gracious note of thanks.

Corporal Sam Morford, our mentally keen New Yorker, found DC's "a life-saver during the too-long, too-difficult summer" when, at Langley Field, Va., he was laid up with a crippled hip. T. Sgt. Forrest Alter from France, now a lieutenant, in thanking me for the "Invitation" sent in spring, tells us that he is having a pretty good time now in Reims in the Army of Occupation and begs us not to be sorry for the men in towns who have no wives or children or fiancées in the States. In the infirmary with a throat infection several months ago the DC's helped mightily. I quote two paragraphs from his letter:

"You told me in your V-mail that you were publishing part of my letter in a forthcoming issue of the *SRL.* Before my copy arrived a friend of mine stationed in another city here in France sent me a clipping from the *SRL* which his sister in the States had sent him. It was the extract from my letter. And she did not know that he knew me. I received a copy of your column from my parents—near Pittsburgh—before my own copy arrived. One contribution that has made life overseas bearable for many of us has been the publication of the Armed Services Edition series. I am not alone in my appreciation of these volumes. There are many, many soldiers who look forward to each new distribution of the books. We appreciate the handy format and the catholic taste shown in the variety of the selections."

Mrs. Perry C. Hill, Newport, R. I., has joined the ranks of DC rhymsters. Having interpreted *Phil. I,* after *sugar mill* in No. 593, in a Biblical sense and troubled by her "rusty memory of the Epistles," she spent a wakeful night, and the resultant below, she says, shows that DC's may be a "resource by night as well as by day" (Alack, say I!):

It may be *worthwhile*
To go *slambang* along
But there's no *oblectation*
In getting it wrong—
An *idolum* 'tis
Which you'd best *rectify*
If you think that *trapiche*
Is in Philippians I—
Or did "I" mean "Islands"?
Of course—what a *folly!*
Well, *Unto This Last*
Your DC's have been jolly.

DOUBLE-CROSTICS: No. 605

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 12 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. English economist (1873-; "Liberty and Tyranny," 1935).

B. Pre-Cambrian (Geol.)

C. English satirical pamphleteer and dramatist (1567-1601; old sp.)

D. Workmen who tried to prevent use of labor-saving devices (1811-16; Engl. Hist.)

E. Finnish genre, portrait, landscape painter (1854-1905).

F. Member of a sect in Armenia and the Caucasus who worship both one good supreme god and subordinate gods.

G. A measuring annelid.

H. A European country.

I. Exclamation enjoining attention.

J. Younger brother of Caleb (Bib.)

K. To shed (as skin, habits, etc.; 2 wds.)

L. A visionary.

M. Thoughtless; unable to think.

N. A European capital.

O. Morons; catkins.

P. An official curb or check upon vice (Colloq.)

Q. A sleeping potion; an opiate.

R. As in the case of an indenture.

S. American operatic and radio mezzo-soprano (1904-).

T. Branch of political economy relating to the production or value of the precious metals.

U. Handles of knives, swords, etc.

V. Bearing; deportment.

W. American artist known for his historical paintings (1817-95; "Battle of Gettysburg" in Harrisburg, Pa., capitol).

X. Anatolian rug characterized by very fine knotting, mellow colors, wool pile, cotton web, etc.

Y. Goddess of Discord (Gr. Myth.)

Z. Stunted.

WORDS

39 161 143 152 47

32 149 112 59 127 122

56 94 35 158 7

101 175 12 27 156 90 109 75

139 100 167 176 60 160 150 38

69 49 113 28 136 132

111 170 76 104 22 178 20 33

15 78 179 168 68 65

138 144 79 118

96 163 81 52 121 86 180

92 54 51 72 66 91 42 106 174

18 115 98 128 2 134 80 64

1 135 84 62 103 89 133 123 162 129

105 93 57 85 126 146 43 14

16 9 172 154 137 73

50 55 24

181 88 4 151 26

34 99 87 147 29 30 155 19 58 23

44 97 145 120 157 70 169 11 83

140 48 77 114 46 71 61 153 25 116

41 141 63 36 17

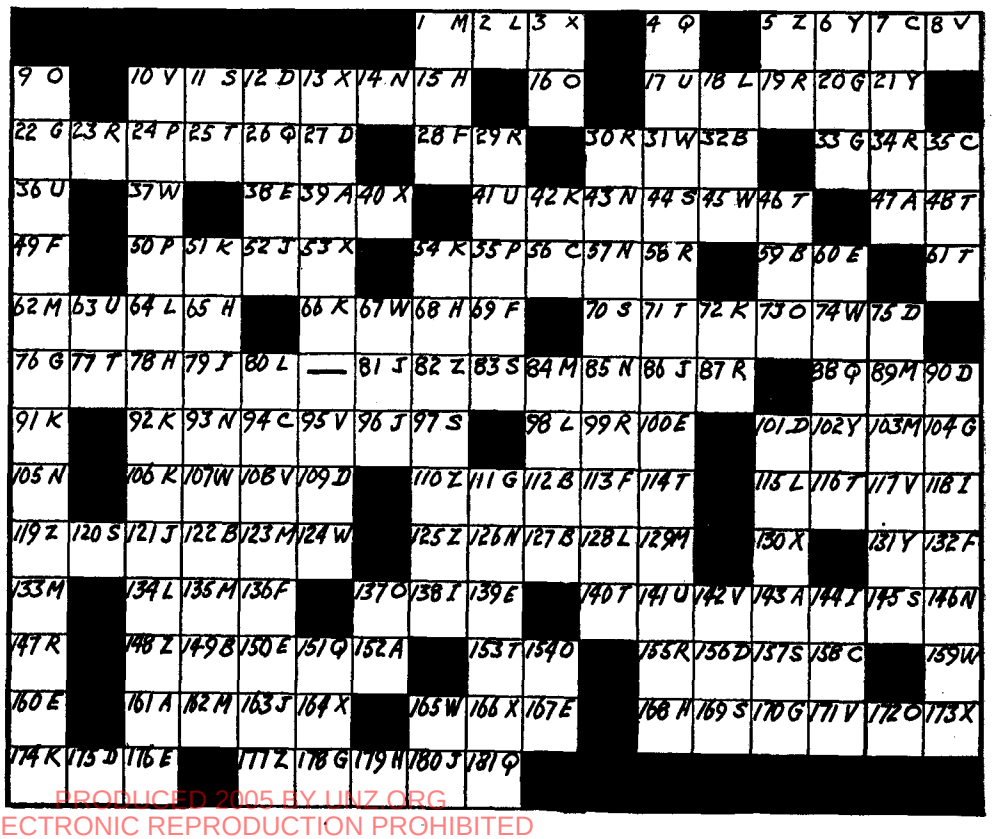
8 171 95 142 108 10 117

67 37 165 31 45 107 159 74 124

53 166 130 164 173 13 40 3

21 6 102 131

5 177 82 148 125 119 110



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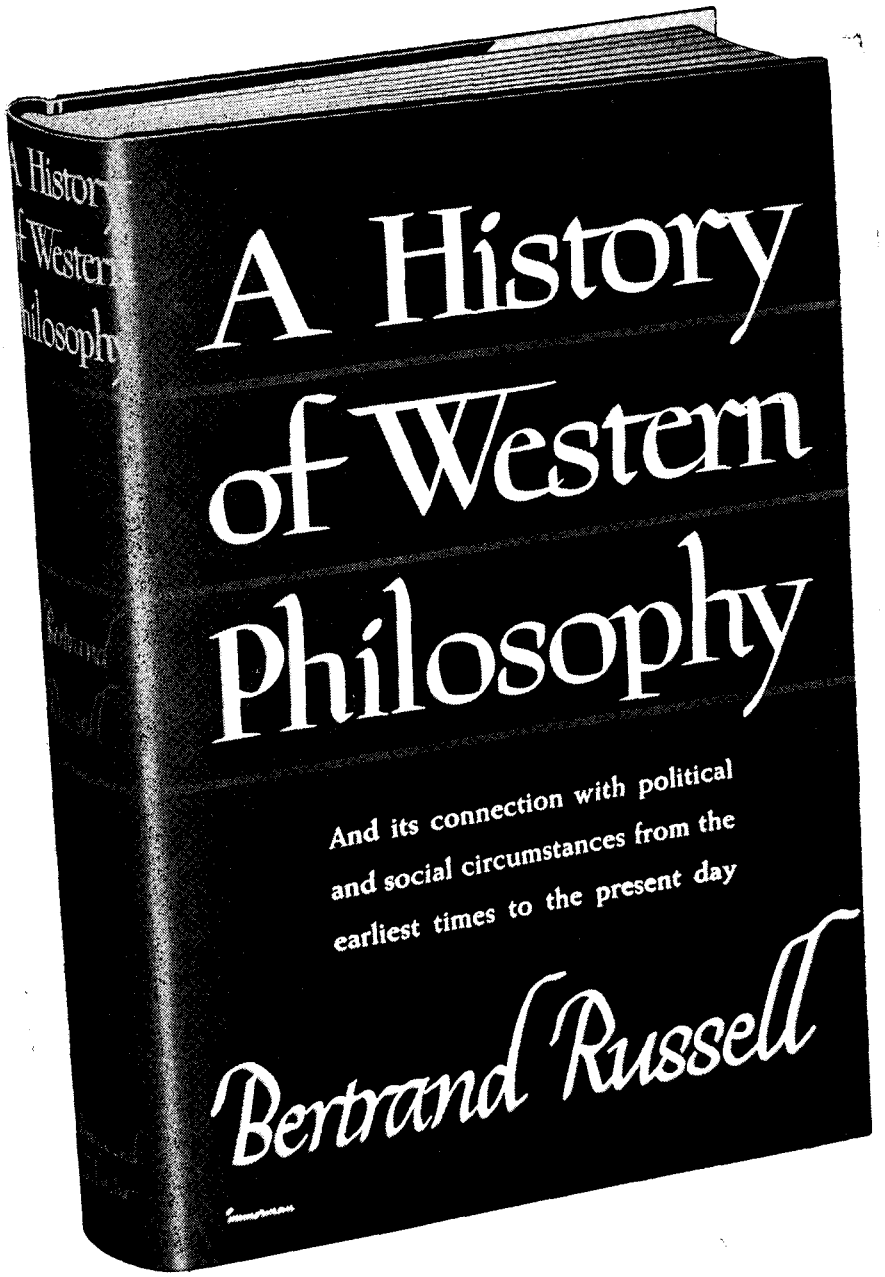
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